d20 system

Revealed: Monte Cook's Player's Handbook

Polyhedron

Genetic Warfare: Hunting the Hunters

gene tech

DELTA GREEN

Driven to Madness by Lights in the Sky

January 2003
Polyhedron 155

RPGA NETWORK

A Gamer's Bookshelf

If you're anything like me, you've got at least one bookshelf filled to bursting with roleplaying games, sourcebooks, and adventures. Ever since the birth of the d20 movement, my game shelves have actually overflowed into several pile colonies that threaten to engulf a nearby filing cabinet and houseplant. But even with all those books designed specifically to help me play or run a better roleplaying game, I still find that I get my best ideas for characters, adventures, and campaigns from books that have nothing at all to do with gaming.

Of all the gaming and nongaming sourcebooks I own, undoubtedly the most indispensible is *An Encyclopedia of Occultism*, a collection of more than 2,500 entries and articles about "occult sciences, occult personalities, psychic science, magic, demonology, spiritualism, mysticism, and metaphysics."

The unfortunate majority of "occult" or "new age" books on the market take an almost embarrassingly credulous view of matters supernatural, presenting their subjects not with the eye of a historian but rather from the point of view of an out-and-out paranormal partisan. The *Encyclopedia's* original editor, Lewis Spence, and other contributors take an objective (but decidedly noncritical) account of magical practices and supernatural beliefs spanning the world and its rich history, covering such game-relevant topics as hundreds of "historical" demons, the ancient Scottish belief in elves who left "changelings" in exchange for kidnapped babies, and the social and religious history of exorcism. The result is a book with idea-starters that you can use to improve the background of your campaign world literally on every single page.

As a random sample, I flipped the *Encyclopedia* to page 305, a page I had never previously read. That page was the seventh of eight focused on the topic of obsession. According to Spence, obsession is the opposite of possession (who knew?). Whereas possession covers control by an evil spirit from within, obsession concerns itself with insanity brought on by persistent spiritual attack by an evil spirit from without. I'd never even heard of obsession before, but after reading the article I had all sorts of ideas about using the phenomenon in a fantasy roleplaying game. How does the PC cleric react when summoned to the bed of a man who shows all signs of possession but who has resisted all attempts at exorcism? What if the man's torments come not from within, but from outside influence, perhaps by a mischievous imp? How does the cleric protect his charge from the mental assault of an unseen foe?

According to the same page, a chronicler of the unknown related the story of a possessed ploughman who often threw up broken glass, nails, and hair. Applying that to D&D, it doesn't take much to imagine a possessed adversary with a breath weapon of sharpened metal, broken glass, and stickpins.

Page 337, again chosen at random, reveals the story of the Rochester Rappings, spirit knockings heard in a house in Hydesville, New York in 1848 that served as the basis of the modern Spiritualist movement. Imagine that same old house 75 years later in a 20s-era *Call of Cthulhu* campaign. What secrets might it hold for a team of investigators, who might protect those secrets, and why, like anything worth knowing in *Call of Cthulhu*, do those secrets need to be protected?

What nongaming sourcebooks do you use as idea starters? Drop me a line at the address below and share the contents of your gamer's bookshelf with the rest of the world.

ERIK

Erik Mona
Polyhedron@paizopublishing.com

Bolt and Quiver by Stan!

WE'VE BEEN SCHLEPPING THROUGH THE WOODS FOR HOURS. WHAT IN PELOR'S NAME ARE WE LOOKING FOR?
A UNICORN
BOLT, YOU DO REALIZE THAT UNICORNS GENERALLY ONLY COME OUT WHEN A MAIDEN FAIR IS AROUND, RIGHT?
NOD
NOD
NOD
NOD
Stan!
YOU'D THINK THEY'D BE WILLING TO MAKE AN EXCEPTION FOR SOMEONE AS GORGEOUS AS ME!
I'D LOVE TO MAKE AN "EXCEPTION" OF YOU
©2002 STAN! WWW.BOLTANDQUIVER.COM

First Watch

Previews, notes & news on the world of d20 gaming

FIRST LOOK: URBAN ARCANA campaign setting

Feats of Fantasy

In May, Wizards of the Coast will release *Urban Arcana*, the first full-service campaign setting for the new *d20 Modern role-playing game*. The setting debuted as one of three campaign models in the d20 Modern core rulebook, but the forthcoming 320-page hardcover release will expand upon that information, providing Gamemasters with everything they need to run fantasy-themed adventures in the modern day.

This month, veteran designer Jeff Grubb shows off some of *Urban Arcana*'s new feats, many of which have to do with fantastic ancestors lurking in the branches of your character's family tree.

Divine Heritage [Initial]

You have divine spell abilities in your background, such as a saint in your family tree, or have had a divine experience, revelation, or epiphany which has left you with modest divine abilities.

Prerequisite: Wisdom 10.

Benefit: Choose three 0-level divine spells ("orisons"). You may cast each of these spells once per day. You are treated as an Acolyte of your divine spellcasting level (minimum of 1) for determining the range at which these spells can be cast.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

Magical Heritage [Initial]

You have magical ability in your background, such as a sorcerer in your bloodline or discovering an ancient tome in the attic as a child. As a result, you mastered some basic spellcasting at a very low level.

Prerequisite: Intelligence 10.

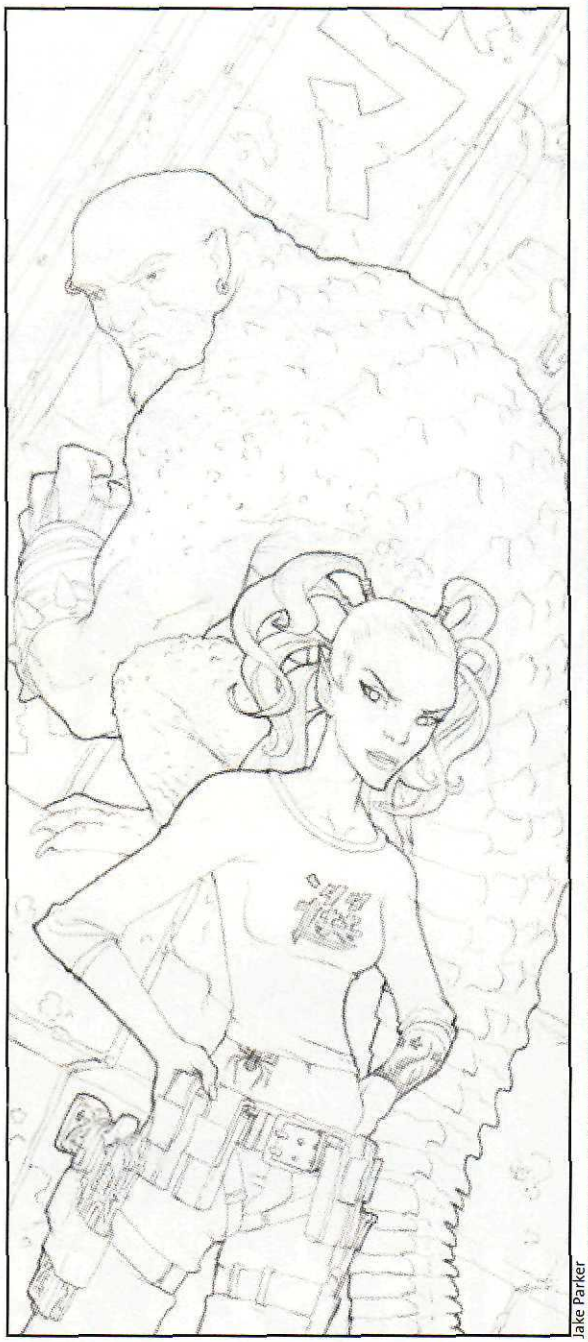
Benefit: Choose three 0-level arcane spells ("cantrips"). You may cast each of these spells once per day. You are treated as a Mage for purposes of arcane spell failure chance when you are wearing armor, and treated as a Mage of your arcane spellcasting level (minimum of 1) for determining the range at which these spells can be cast.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

Shadow Heritage [Initial]

You have a creature of Shadow in your distant ancestry. The exact nature of that being is immaterial (though it may be a source of adventure), as the overpowering genetic tide of humanity has reduced its special abilities to a few salient features.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on two different saving throws of your choice. You also gain low-light vision and see twice as far as a normal human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and



Jake Parker

Fixtures of Urban Arcana: *Maddie Webber the drow Spellslinger and Kurt Mason the dwarven Shapeshifter.*

similar conditions of poor illumination. You retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. You cannot take both Shadow Heritage and Shadowkind.

Shadowkind [Initial]

You are a native from beyond Shadow.

Benefit: You may choose one of the varieties of Shadowkind from those provided under Shadowkind, below, and gain all benefits and weaknesses of the Shadowkind you choose.

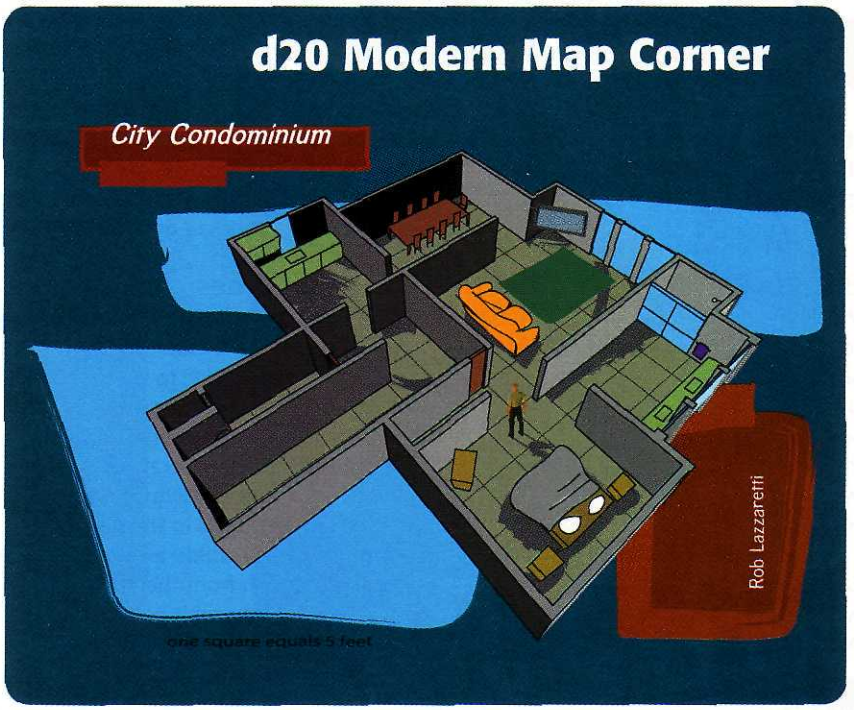
In addition, you have the following effects. You have no occupation. Your Wealth bonus is +0. You gain skills as if your Intelligence was 2 points lower (you effectively have one less skill point each time you gain a level). You have an additional weakness as a result of your passing through Shadow.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character You cannot take both Shadow Heritage and Shadowkind.

Types of Shadowkind

The final *Urban Arcana* campaign setting will include detailed rules regarding races of Shadow and the various rules associated with playing Shadowkind characters. You'll have the chance to choose from any of the following creatures, each of which comes with its own set of advantages and weaknesses.

Elves: The familiar D&D elf suffers a toxic reaction to the pollutants in the air of the modern world, resulting in a -1 penalty to all Fortitude saves.

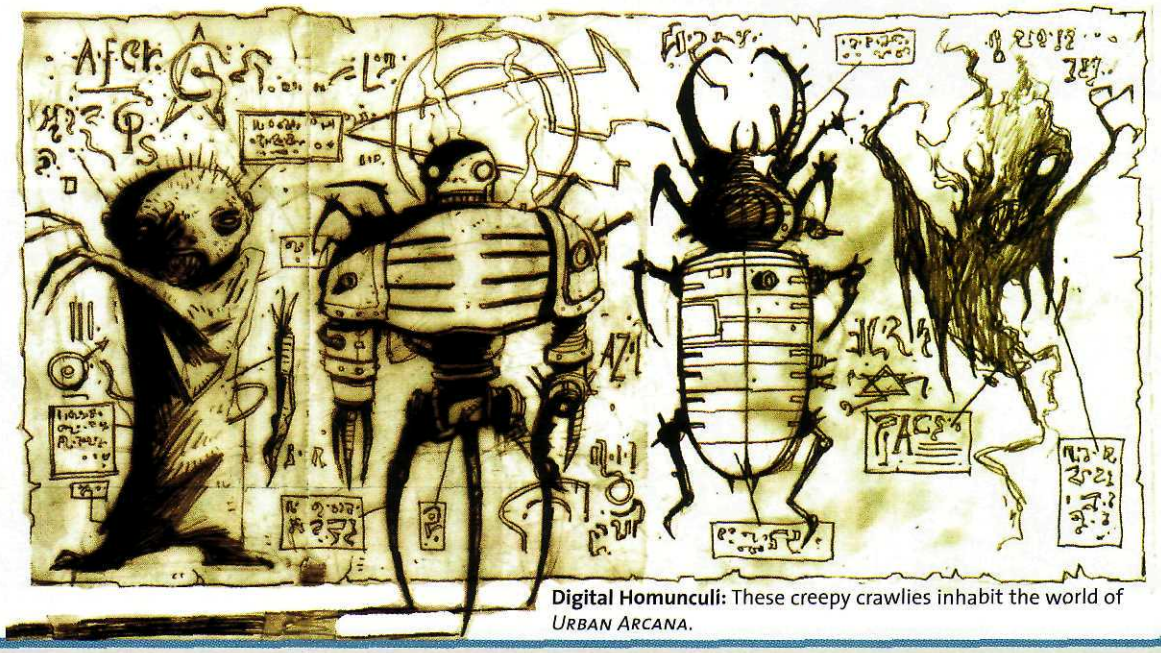


Gnomes: Long saddled with the limits of steam technology in standard fantasy campaigns, the gnomes of *Urban Arcana* adore modern tech, sometimes to their detriment.

Goblins: Thickheaded in the extreme, most goblins cannot choose modern skills (including Profession!).

Shakeblooded Human: Folks like you and me with reptilian heritage awakened by the onset of Shadow, weak-willed snakeblooded humans are vassals of the yuan-ti from the realm of Shadow, suffering a -1 penalty on all Will saves.

In addition to these options, *Urban Arcana* includes rules and tips for playing dwarves, orcs, half-orcs, halflings, gnolls, drow, draconic humans, ogres, and more.



Dean Ormston

Digital Homunculi: These creepy crawlies inhabit the world of *Urban Arcana*.

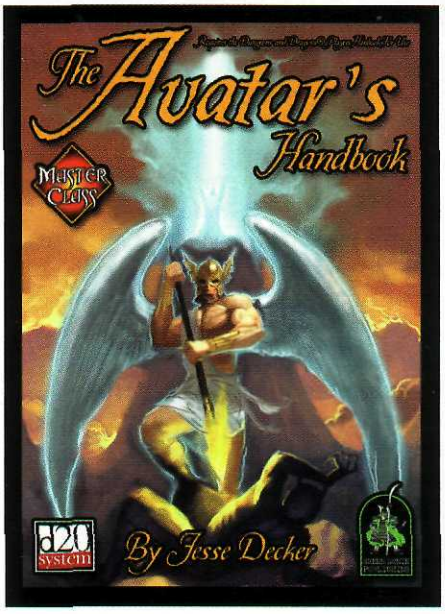
Release Roundup

It's 2003. Do you have the year's first d20 products, yet? The following goodies are set to hit store shelves in January and February.

Bastion Press

While the d20 System hardly suffers for a lack of information about assassins, tracking down the best poison to use as a weapon or plot point can sometimes get a little tricky. Bastion Press comes to the rescue in January with *Pale Designs: A Poisoner's Handbook*.

Pale Designs, written by Steven Creech and Kevin Ruesch, covers a wide array of magical and mundane poisons usable by characters and Gamemasters. The 96-page full-color book also includes prestige classes, new equipment, and poison-based magic items. It costs $24.95.



Goodman Games

Anyone running an urban fantasy campaign will have reason to anticipate the *Complete Guide to Wererats*, which puts a political spin on everyone's favorite sewer denizens. Author Keith Baker presents wererats as an indidious secret society whose members infiltrate key posts in the government, military, and guilds, ensuring political protection from their enemies. When fighting can't be avoided, the mystic Council of the Flesh unleashes its horrific crossbred monsters or spreads filth and disease to eliminate entire cities without lifting a finger. The layabouts.

The 32-page $11.00 product contains the usual array of prestige classes, skills, and feats, but an innovative, quirky approach that has defined Goodman Games as a company to watch makes this sourcebook well worth the hunt.

Green Ronin Publishing

Green Ronin added scores of fiends to the d20 multiverse with *Legions of Hell* and *Armies of the Abyss*. In February, the publisher teams with *Dragon Magazine* editor Jesse Decker to give players and GMs new allies in the fight against darkness: celestials.

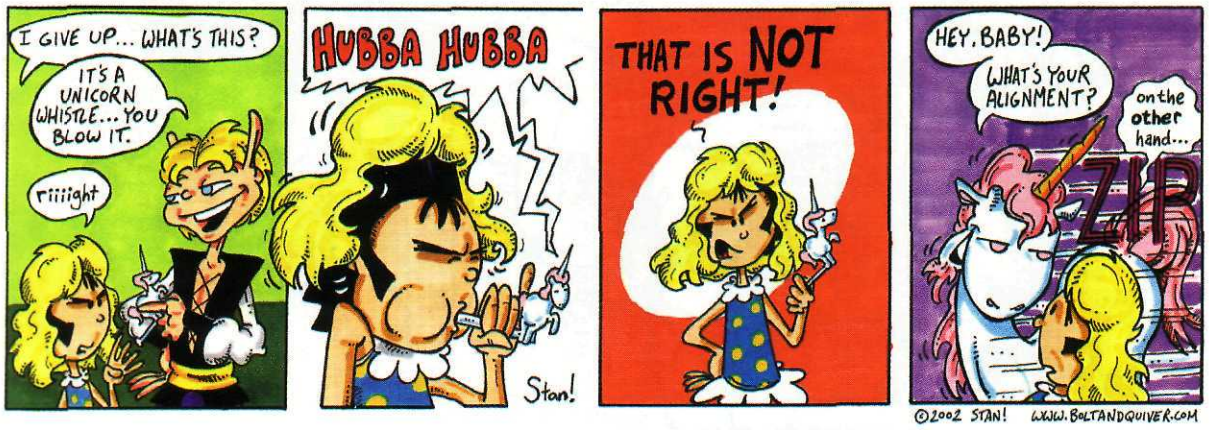
Decker's *The Avatar's Handbook*, the latest in Green Ronin's *Master Class* series, presents the avatar, a new class that can summon celestials to aid them in their struggle against cosmic evil. Avatars can even transform into celestials in combat, channeling divine energy directly from the Heavenly Host.

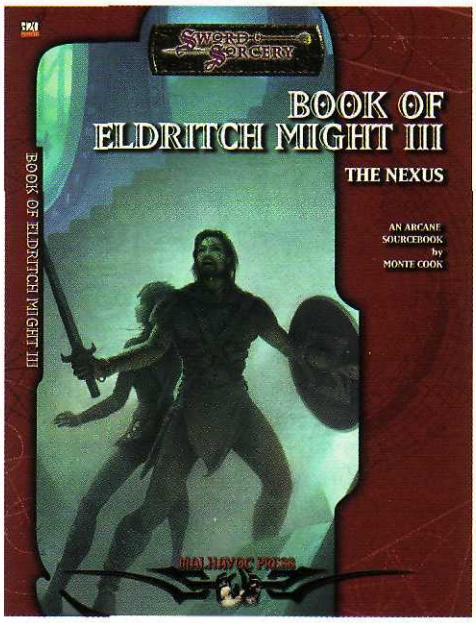
And since the avatar needs allies to summon, Decker has helpfully included more than 25 new celestials. In exchange for $16.95, your paladins and good clerics need never wet themselves at the sight of cloven hooves again.

Malhavoc Press

Dungeon Master's Guide author Monte Cook is hard at work on a variant *Player's Handbook* (see *Monte's Haul*, p. 16), but his fans won't have to wait long for the *Book of Eldritch Might III: The Nexus*, which hits store shelves in January. The 96-page sourcebook details several magical locales, ranging from the mysterious City in the Storm to the primeval fortress where dragons first taught magic to mankind. Explore the sites' potential with a host of new spells, creatures, magical items, and feats. The book retails for $12.95.

Bolt and Quiver by Stan!





Mongoose Publishing

England's Mongoose Publishing continues two popular series in January with the release of the *Quintessential Paladin*, a sourcebook offering dozens of options for righteous characters, and the *Slayer's Guide to Undead*. That month also sees the release of the *Ultimate Equipment Guide*, a collection of equipment from a collection of d20 publishers, and *Cities of Fantasy: Arcania*, a complete metropolis for use in d20 fantasy games.

Mystic Eye Games

Admit it. You've got a deck of tarot cards, whether lovingly wrapped in cloth or tucked away forgotten in some drawer of old game junk. With Mystic Eye's *Arcane Mysteries: Tarot Magic*, you'll finally be able to get some good use for the cards. The book won't tell you how to divine the future or ask if "there are any spirits in the room," but it will give you tips on using tarot decks in your d20 games to cast spells or predict a character's future. Mystic Eye's press on the book promises that it will "blur the line between what it fantasy and what is real." Spooky. The 128-page book will set you back $19.99.

Your Mission: Living Spycraft

Alderac Entertainment Group has partnered with the RPGA to launch *Living Spycraft*, a global member-run organized play campaign that casts you in the role of an international superspy. Based on AEG's immensely popular *Spycraft* d20 espionage roleplaying game, *Living Spycraft* offers a continuous game environment with Agencies in the United States and the UK. Eventually, *Living Spycraft* will grow to include Branches of play all around the world (similar to Living Greyhawk's regional structure).

Living Spycraft will use nearly every rule from the *Spycraft Espionage Handbook* and its supplements, allowing secret agents from all over the real world to affect international plotlines far from home. The campaign's first adventures (here called "serials") should be available by download from the RPGA website (www.wizards.com/rpga) by the time you read this. Attendees of Winter Fantasy (January 23-26, Ft. Wayne, IN) will get a chance to hit the campaign running in the scenario *A Routine Operation*, by Shawn Carman, an adventure described as an Agency mission that goes "all too horribly wrong." Don't forget to pack your laser cufflinks!

Learn more about the campaign at www.spycraftrpg.com/livingspycraft.

Necromancer Games

Like 'em or not, taverns are an important part of most fantasy campaigns. What better way to fight a cliché than to embrace it? Summon some old school excitement and delve into the *Book of Taverns*, a meaty sourcebook from the company that brought you the *Tome of Horrors*. The volume contains 10 complete taverns designed for easy insertion into your campaign with plenty of maps and adventure hooks. (Product price unavailable at press time.)

Bolt and Quiver by Stan!

NOBLE UNICORN, I BESEECH YOU... LEAD ME TO SEE MY TRUE LOVE. I HAVE NOT LAID EYES ON HER IN FAR TOO LONG.
Stan!
YOU HAVE A GIRLFRIEND?
THIS I'VE GOT TO SEE!
NOD NOD NOD NOD NOD
WHY HAVEN'T I HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT HER BEFORE?
I FEARED, FRIEND QUIVER, THAT YOU MIGHT STEAL HER AWAY FROM ME.
I COULDN'T DO THAT, BOLT
I DON'T HAVE THE CARRYING CAPACITY
COMB TUG COMB TUG TUG TUG SNAP
FOO! THAT MAKES FIVE COMBS THIS WEEK
©2002 STAN! WWW.BOLTANDQUIVER.COM

RPGA NETWORK

News from the Top

By Overwhelming Popular Request...

We have started to update and change the RPGA website again! We have engaged someone to help us achieve this in a timely manner since so many members have said that they wanted us to address the matter urgently. It's now a top priority and will gather speed as we move forward and into 2003. That said, we'll still use *Polyhedron* as our flagship for information flow, as we have to recognize that not every member has regular Internet access.

D&D Player Rewards

This is a huge new RPGA-exclusive program that is available for signup right now on the RPGA website, though participants won't start qualifying until January 1st, 2003 for its benefits. I'll state this right up front, though. When proven successful and all the kinks are driven out we will consider looking to expand this to other game systems such as *Star Wars*. I recommend signing up sooner rather than later, as we expect a huge take-up and we don't want to delay the processing of your application.

Some Facts: You can join this program for free at the RPGA website. Players earn points for playing in reported RPGA-sanctioned D&D games. For every 20 points they earn under this program, they receive benefits mailed to them automatically three times a year. These benefits will include "Campaign Cards," special character creation and in-game effect cards usable in specified campaigns. These Campaign Cards will all be unique to the program and will be specially produced with full-color art. As the program gathers speed we will look to add more and more rewards.

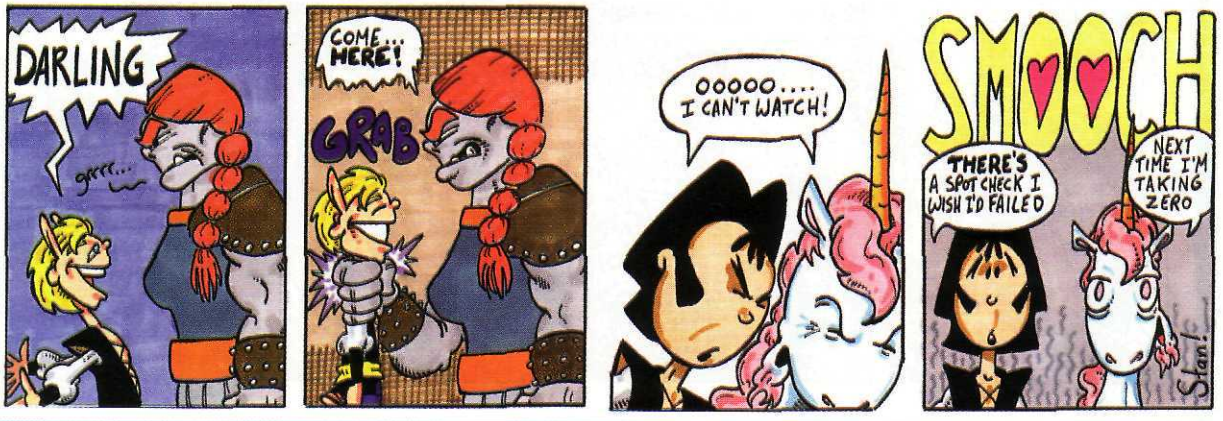
This means that as of January 1st, 2003, when the new program goes live, we will be stopping the old player points and ranking system. We have to recognize that those players have earned considerable points advancing in the old program, albeit in a program where those points were of little or no value to the individual. Under the new program, those points physically mean something, and you are rewarded for that participation. Also as part of that recognition, we will be transferring those player points into the new program. These means that existing members will qualify for more Campaign Cards over the first couple of mailings based on their rankings in both Classic and Campaign play as of the 31st of December, 2002.

The rest of the hows, whys, and wherefores are on the website for you all to read. We will be talking in more depth about the program in upcoming issues of *Polyhedron* and at Winter Fantasy 2003.

Ian Richards
Worldwide RPGA Director
ianr@wizards.com

RPGA Worldwide Director Ian Richards kicks back at Gen Con.

Bolt and Quiver by Stan!



Gen Con 2002: A Look Back

So Long, Milwaukee.

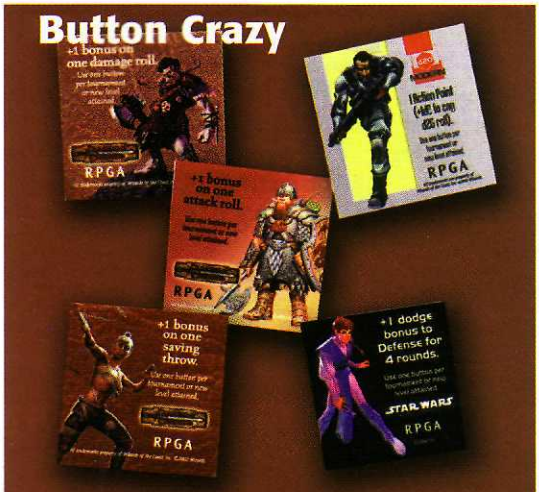
This year marked the last in which Gen Con, the game industry's largest and most exciting convention, will be held in Miwaukee, its home since the 1980s. The RPGA kicked off the event with style, decorating the Spartan arena in which Network games are held with a variety of posters and attractive signs.

Despite the usual last-minute squabble for meeting room space that this year resulted in the unfortunate cancellation of the annual member's meeting, RPGA honchos Ian Richards and Stephen Radney-MacFarland managed to hold a make-up seminar on Thursday. There, Stephen revealed that he thought the base level RPGA membership "will be free forever." Richards and Radney-MacFarland laid out the plans for the organization over the next year, including a move to give LIVING GREYHAWK's Circle of Six volunteer campaign coordinators more autonomy in decision making and campaign managment.

Highlights of the show's games offerings included the ever popular LIVING CITY, LIVING FORCE, and LIVING DEATH interactives, a preview of the then-yet-to-be-published *City of the Spider Queen* FORGOTTEN REALMS adventure, and the D&D Open, the longest-running competitive roleplaying event in history.

Nexy year, Gen Con US moves to Indianapolis, Indiana and promises to offer a thrilling slate of RPGA activities and meetings.

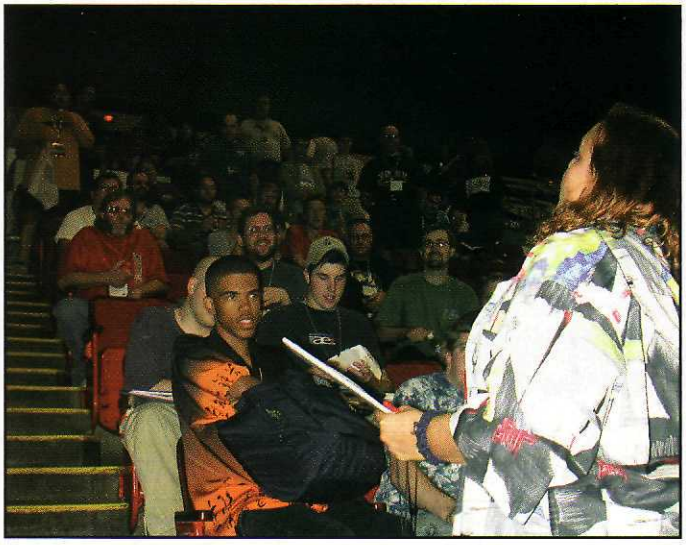
Visit www.wizards.com/rpga to sign up early. Tell 'em *POLY* sent you.



The RPGA distributed six "bonus buttons" at this year's Gen Con. Because the buttons grant special bonuses and abilities to characters in RPGA campaign play, a number of questions related to them have arisen. Check out www.wizards.com/rpga for the straight skinny.

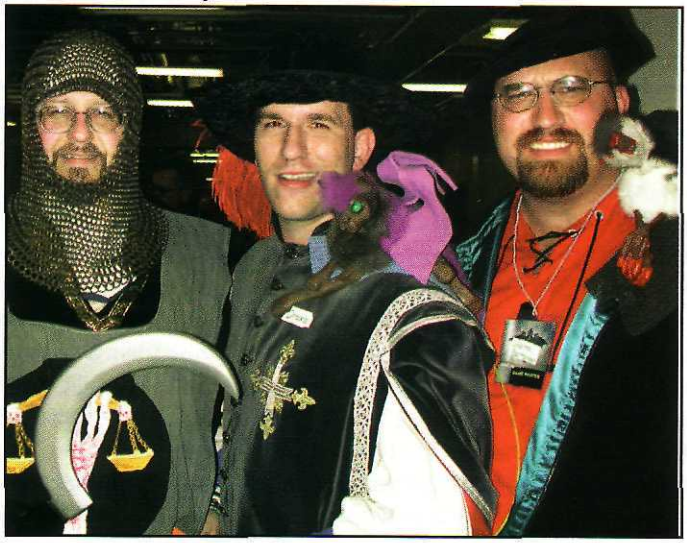
Nobody Does it Better: Cynthia and August Hahn (left) hold down Network HQ under the watchful eye of Cheryl Frech, who has managed HQ for more than a decade. 2002 was her last year. Thanks, Cheryl!

View from Above: Members puzzle out a LIVING CITY encounter.



Thank You, Mistress!: Gail Reese marshals players to LIVING GREYHAWK tables with a booming voice and great authority.

Tasty Treat: Russ Morrisey and Eric Noah show off their stuff before the Ennie award ceremony.



Three Amigos: RPGA members get into costume and adventure at the LIVING CITY Interactive.

Victory: .D&D Open Champions (in no particular order): George Strayton, Mary Schmidt, Mark Barnard, Gail Reese, John Wilkie, Dirk Chin-Leung, Glen Goodwin, and Brandon Amancioo.

The Ennies: d20's Best

Before the release of the Third Edition D&D rules, before anyone had even mentioned the words "d20 System," Eric Noah built himself a website. More than two years later, that site has a new webmaster, Russ Morrisey, and a new name: EN World (www.enworld.org). Fans of the d20 System know EN World as the best information resource on the Internet, with updates on new products and messageboards filled with the chatter of gamers and industry professionals.

This year, Morrisey took his site to Gen Con with a live award ceremony for the Ennies, EN World's annual nod to the best products the d20 System has to offer. Sponsored by Gen Con owner Peter Adkison and hosted by d20 pioneer Ryan Dancey, the award ceremony recognized the best achievements in d20 according to the opinions of a specially selected nominating committee made up of EN World luminaries and a final popular vote by visitors to the site. As you can see, both the committee and the voters have excellent taste when it comes to the Best Aid or Accessory category.

2002 Ennie Award Winners

Best D20 Game: *Call of Cthulhu* (Wizards of the Coast)
Best Adventure: *If Thoughts Could Kill* (Malhavoc Press)
Best Campaign Setting: *Oriental Adventures* (Wizards of the Coast)
Best Setting Supplement: *Freeport: City of Adventure* (Green Ronin Publishing)
Best Rules Supplement: *Manual of the Planes* (Wizards of the Coast)
Best Aid or Accessory: *DUNGEON/POLYHEDRON Magazine* (Wizards of the Coast)
Best Cartography: *Freeport: City of Adventure* (Green Ronin Publishing)
Best Art (Interior): *Deities & Demigods* (Wizards of the Coast)
Best Art (Cover): *Lord of the Iron Fortress* (Wizards of the Coast)
Best Graphic Design and Layout: *Call of Cthulhu* (Wizards of the Coast)
Best Monster Supplement: *Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie* [Scarred Lands] (Sword & Sorcery Studios)
Best Free Product or Web Enhancement: *Portable Hole Full of Beer* (Ambient)
Best Official Website: Wizards of the Coast (www.wizards.com)
Best Fan Resource Site: SWRPGNetwork (www.swrpgnetwork.com)
Best Fan Campaign Site: Conan d20 (www.fyrestryke.com/adilbrand/conan.htm)
Best Publisher: Wizards of the Coast
Special Award for Contribution to Open Gaming: Ryan Dancey

He runs two weekly D&D campaigns, wrote the Third Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*, owns the influential Malhavoc Press, and is a fixture of the d20/Open Gaming movement.

And he's currently writing his own *Player's Handbook*.

***Polyhedron* recently had a chance to talk with Monte Cook about his game, his company, and his exciting new project.**

Monte's Haul

***Polyhedron* chats with a d20 Genuis**

The Ptolus Campaign

You run two different weekly campaigns. Why did you decide to do such a crazy thing?

Part of the advantage is that it allows me to play two games a week but only do about 150% of the work (rather than 200%). Because it's the same setting, all the characters are in the same places, all the background events and the NPCs that they run into are very frequently the same. When one group goes to the guy who identifies magic items, it's the same guy that the other group goes to. Not only does that make it easier, but it's fun for me, because it makes for a very dynamic kind of setting. If one group is doing something off in one part of town, they might hear something that the other group doesn't hear about, and if they communicate back and forth, one group is learning stuff about the town from the other group. It makes it all seem much more real and seem like the setting is more alive.

What is Ptolus?

Ptolus is an entirely urban campaign. Well, urban/dungeon in that there are a lot of underground areas underneath this big fantasy city. It's a pretty typical large D&D city with the exception that there are remnants of sort of a Renaissance-level technology left over. There are some firearms and things of that nature, but they're more leftovers than a developing thing. Ptolus is a world in decline as opposed to a world that's getting better (although the player characters are trying to do something about that).

How has running Ptolus for the last few years impacted your game design?

In a lot of very direct ways in that a lot of adventures that have been part of the Ptolus campaign have become published game adventures, such as *Queen of Lies*, from Fiery Dragon, some of the stuff that I've done for the Wizards of the Coast website, *The Banewarrens*, from Malhavoc Press, and *Beyond the Veil*, from Atlas Games.

That's the very obvious and direct way, but in other ways, as I've played the game for these many years, now, I've noticed places where I would say to myself "I wish there was a spell that did that," or "I'm going to make up a cool new magic item for an NPC that does this," and it seems pretty logical that if I see a need for something like that in my campaign, other people are going to see a need for that kind of thing in their campaign. And the same is true for optional rules and things like that, so that sort of material finds its way into the products I write all the time.

Beyond the adventures, have you ever considered doing a more specifically "Ptolus" product?

I get asked for such a product quite often. I post a lot of Ptolus information on my website and have heard anecdotally, particularly with the release of *The Banewarrens*, which does have 5 or 6 pages of Ptolus information in it, that there are people out there running Ptolus campaigns just based off that and the stuff that was on my website.

Is that weird?

That's kind of weird. But cool. These people come to my message boards or email and ask me questions about NPCs or locations in Ptolus because they're running a Ptolus campaign. So there clearly are people who would be interested in such a product and so I would never want to say no, but I know our schedule through 2003 and I'm not planning on doing anything like that.

Wizards of the Coast

What did it feel like to get to be the guy wrote the DMG for Third Edition Dungeons & Dragons? Did you ask for that?

I know that that's really what I wanted. When they selected the people to work on Third Edition it was not clear at that time that it was going to be "one guy writes the *PH*, one guy writes the *DMG*, one guy writes the *MM*." Those decisions weren't even made, yet. People talk about Monte Cook and the *DMG*, Jonathan Tweet and the *Player's Handbook* and Skip Williams and the *Monster Manual*, but the truth is that for the first two years of the game's development, that wasn't really the way it was at all. It wasn't until pretty late in the process that it became "you have that book, I have this book."

But to answer the question, yes, I wanted to write the *DMG* because playing the game is fun, but I've always been the DM. I love being the DM. When I went to go buy D&D to start up my own game it was 1979, I guess, and I asked them for Dungeons & Dragons at my local B. Dalton and they didn't have that, because of course it wasn't out anymore, but I didn't know. The only thing they had was the brand new *Dungeon Master's Guide*. That was the very first product that I bought, so I still have just incredibly fond memories of the *DMG*.

It was this amazing full circle when we sent the Third Edition stuff off to Gary Gygax and Gary came back and said "Oh, Third Edition seems really cool," but then he kind of raved about the *DMG* a little bit, and that was a really cool full-circle kind of moment because his *Dungeon Master's Guide* was so influential to me.

How has it felt to see the fan reaction to Third Edition?

It's great that response has been so positive. We weren't at all sure that it was going to be. We were given the mandate by the powers that be to make the game the game that it became. Not specifically, but [than-Wizards of the Coast President] Peter Adkison said: "make this a good game. Make this the best game we can make it," so that's what we tried to do. We thought "boy, we sure might be alienating some of the existing fanbase," but it turns out for the most part that was not the case, and that Second Edition players leapt right on board and were with us, and that's really cool.

Having gone through that entire process, what words of advice do you have to the people who will be designing Fourth Edition some time down the line?

The big huge thing that we learned was that D&D players want a really good game and are willing to change and accept change more than we even thought. If there are things I could go back and redo in Third Edition a lot of them probably are the way they are because we were afraid to make too big a change. We called them "sacred cows," things that made D&D D&D and we couldn't change them. I think that Fourth Edition can probably take that idea and go even farther with it.

The differences between First Edition and Second Edition were not very big, and I think that came from a level of conservatism, and maybe at that time that was the right choice to make. I don't know. I think my advice to a Fourth Edition designer is "do what will make a good game."

Malhavoc Press

So you've got a job that most gamers would kill for—to be one of the senior designers of Wizards of the Coast, to help guide the future of the game, to have written the *Dungeon Master's Guide*—and right at the height of all the hoopla you back out and decide to do your own thing with Malhavoc. Why?

The short answer, I guess, is that while working at Wizards of the Coast is cool, there's a level of creative control that an individual game designer, even a senior game designer, does not have, and that's the kind of control I wanted. Not necessarily because I'm a big control freak, but because it can be frustrating sometimes to want to do something but be forced in a different direction because someone else who has a different or higher position in the company wants to go a different way.

There are also advantages to being a small publisher as opposed to the big guy. Wizards of the Coast has to be more conservative in their game products—and by conservative I'm talking about in the rules—than a small publisher does. Wizards has to make sure very carefully that they're not introducing anything that's overpowered and not balanced, and to some extent they've done that. Overall I think they've done a good job.

But as a small publisher, not producing the core that everything else is based on, I can be a little more free to experiment and do something wacky and see how that works and see if people like it.

Do you have an example of the type of thing that you've been able to do at Malhavoc that you wouldn't have been able to do at Wizards?

I've got a type of feat that runs through the Eldritch Might books called eldritch feats. Eldritch feats are sort of like metamagic feats but they don't modify the level of the spell. Instead, they have a lot of requirements at the front end in order for you to pick up the feat: high stats, high level, that kind of thing. It's just a really minor example, but that kind of thing probably wouldn't find its way into a D&D book because Wizards has an idea of what is good and what isn't as far as Third Edition design goes. And I helped develop that, but at the same time didn't agree with everything that came out of it. I guess I'd have to label myself as a little more radical a game designer than Wizards of the Coast, and having my own design studio allows me to exercise a little of that freedom.

Who was Malhavoc?

Malhavoc is the character that I played when I was 14 years old, playing in my friend's D&D game. He was an elf wizard.

Now be honest. How many 18s did he have?
[Guilty laughter.] Like four. He was totally this high-level munchkin asskicker.

Were you proud of him nonetheless?
Oh, yeah. Absolutely.

What was the coolest thing Malhavoc ever did?
Well, he was actually an evil character, and he once tricked all the other characters to sell themselves into slavery to an enemy city so that I could... it's a long story, but anyway, I sold the other player characters into slavery.

So naturally when you came to choose a name for your company, you fell upon this backstabbing slaver...
Well, mostly it's just because it's a cool name. And little did I know that there's some Canadian rock band named Malhavoc, which we recently found out. And apparently there was some *Superfriends* villain named Malhavoc...

Well, two different people invented calculus, so you shouldn't feel too bad.
[Laughs.]

What were your creative and personal goals with Malhavoc the minute you stepped out the Wizards door?
Not at all what happened. I fully intended to make my way as a freelance designer working for other companies. Malhavoc would be just sort of this thing I did on the side. Make a few extra bucks here and there. I didn't expect it to take off. It would just be sort of an outlet for me to do the sort of "weird idea" game design that I've been talking about.

Lo and behold, it really took off and it quickly became clear that both creatively and financially the smart thing to do was to pay attention to Malhavoc and not work freelance for other game companies. That's kind of what it's done. So now my goals have really changed. It's no longer just kind of a lark.

Now my goals with Malhavoc are to focus more on quality than on quantity. We don't put out as many books as a lot of d20 publishers do. We don't work with very many authors. We keep everything pretty close to the vest, and that's because I'm really interested in maintaining a really high level of quality, so that when people pick up a Malhavoc product they at least know that it's not going to totally wreck their game. That the people who wrote it (which is more often than not me) at least know the rules and understand what's going on.

You've worked with Bruce Cordell and Sean Reynolds. Do you have plans to expand the stable of people who write for Malhavoc?
Yes. Skip Williams is going to write an event book for us. I wrote *Requiem for a God*, our first event book, about the death of a god. Bruce Cordell is writing our second event book, which is called *When the Sky Falls*, about a meteor strike. Skip is going to be writing a book called *Cry Havoc*, which is a sourcebook about introducing a war into your game.

If money and sales were no option in terms of designing a roleplaying game product, what is your ideal product?
That would be the product that I'm working on right now, which is going to be called *Arcana Unearthed: The Malhavoc Handbook*. And basically, what it is is a variant *Player's Handbook*.

It's going to be an Open Game License product that, well, if you remember *Unearthed Arcana*, the old First Edition D&D product, if that book had been a stand-alone product, that's what this book will be. It's not going to have a cavalier and a thief-acrobat in it. It's going to be a *Player's Handbook*, but it's going to have all new races, all new classes, all new feats, all new spells. It'll be a stand-alone book. You can use it instead of your *Player's Handbook*. But if you don't want to do that and you just want to grab three of these classes and this new race and these feats and spells, you can do that, too. So it's usable both ways.

It's going to be a 240-page hardback book, and it will come out at Gen Con 2003. I'm really excited. It's a very, very, interesting game design exercise, because my goal here is to create 11 or 12 new classes that fill all the roles that you want to have filled in a d20 fantasy game but not just have clear analogues of the stuff that's in the *Player's Handbook* and have them all work together and have them all be internally balanced but also be balanced with the original *Players Handbook* stuff.

What's an example of a class role you plan to fill?
There's going to be a character class called the champion. At first glance, the champion would seem to be an awful lot like the paladin, because the champion's thing is that the champion devotes himself to a cause or to another person or to some abstract principle or to a religion and defends that and its causes and beliefs and whatever. So that sort of sounds like a paladin, but the champion is actually quite a bit different because the champion doesn't have to be the knight in shining armor on the white charger. The champion is interesting because, while it's one class, a champion of a particular religion and a champion of death and a champion of the king are all going to be very different sorts of characters.

In fact, that's actually a model that I'm playing with a lot. Another class that I'm working on is called the totem warrior. The totem warrior is sort of this outdoorsy almost barbarian or ranger kind of guy except that he chooses a totem animal and gets different class-based powers based on the animal that he chooses. So a bear totem warrior is actually going to be fairly different than a snake totem warrior.

Not all the classes are based on that model, but one thing that's cool about that model is that it allows the DM to say "in my campaign I want there to be the bat totem." I might not provide the bat totem, but it will be really easy for the DM to create his own totems or rules for being the champion of something that I didn't think of.

Will the book similarly revisit the combat rules?
Yes. The core Open Gaming System is going to be the same, but I am going to be making some changes to even the combat rules and the magic rules. Particularly to the magic rules. It'll be someone's option. You could use the straight open system right out of the normal *Player's Handbook* and still use all these classes, but I've got some different rules for how to handle certain combat situations and grappling and some of the classes and the things that they do kind of bring about new combat options.

What are your hopes for the book? Do you hope other companies will do support material once it's out there and open?
I have no idea. I haven't seen anybody really embrace that level of the d20 license or the Open Gaming License. There have been collections of spells and prestige classes and whatnot, and I guess there's some officially licensed *Dragonstar* things, but I am going to make it, from an open license point of view, very easy for someone to write an adventure using the classes and the new things that I'm presenting.

What else is ahead for Malhavoc?
We're going to come out with a book called *Malhavoc Handbook II*, which will essentially be monsters and magic items but it will also be some other things that will sort of supplement the *Malhavoc Handbook*.

The *Player's Handbook* implicitly has a setting that goes along with it where wizards prepare their spells ahead of time and there are clerics who pray for spells and there are these sets of gods and people use longswords and whatever. Even if you don't know anything about GREYHAWK, there's a set of assumptions there. The same will be true with the *Malhavoc Handbook*, but they'll be different assumptions, in some ways very different assumptions. The core assumption is the same: that it's a fantasy world where people use magic and swords. But there will be different assumptions. So there will be a world, a setting sort of implied.

Malhavoc Handbook II, which will be called *The Diamond Throne*, will give a little more information about that setting for people who want to get into that. I'm not really interested at this time in having a big setting, you know "this is our FORGOTTEN REALMS" kind of thing. But it'll be enough of a backdrop for people who want to use the races and classes that I've created for the *Malhavoc Handbooks* in the setting that I'm going to use while I playtest and create the races and classes. It'll provide that sort of information.

Next year we're also going to come out with a book called *Chaositech*, which is sort of a weird amalgamation of magic and technology but not really either. *Chaositech* is really kind of weird techno devices that are powered by chaos, so they work in strange ways and produce strange effects that don't necessarily need to be bounded by the laws of physics, so it's almost like technological magic.

Sean Reynolds is going to be doing more character books like the one that's out now, and he's also going to be doing a big book dealing with angels, including information about playing angels. On the much closer horizon, Bruce Cordell has written a big psionic classbook called *Mindscapes* that will be out in the spring.

Into the Future

Where do you think d20 and the Open Gaming Movement will be in two years?
I think that in a couple years we'll probably see some of the players in the d20 industry change. A lot of people predict that a lot of small game publishers will drop away, but I think that's actually pretty unlikely. Those are the guys doing it because they love it. They aren't out to make a lot of money. The people who are out there churning out products interested in making a lot of money at this I think in two years are going to start to see that they aren't making as much money as they want and may very well try to do something different.

I'm not a prognosticator enough to know details, but I get the feeling that some of the people putting out d20 products right now probably won't be doing so in two years.

Do you dare prognosticate further ahead than two years?
In five years I expect I'll still be working on Malhavoc. In 10 years, I'll probably be doing something entirely different. That may be just a personal thing. That may be because the industry will change. I don't know. I go back and forth on that all the time, because who knows? In five or six years there might be a Fourth Edition, and Fourth Edition might completely revitalize things the way Third Edition did and keep things going. I don't know. I think, ultimately, it's almost foolish to try to predict that far in the future. So many times in my own career I've predicted "oh, I probably won't still be in gaming in two years." I'm going on year 15, here.

I think that the industry is in a really great place right now. I'm very upbeat about the industry as a whole. I see product quality, pretty much by everybody, increasing, sometimes by leaps and bounds. I think that good products, even from other companies, encourage people to buy more products. That means that customers who get a good product from someone else are more likely to buy my products as well, so I'm thrilled to see other companies produce quality stuff. It's a great time to be a gamer.

I've heard a few people wonder if the 80s were gaming's golden age or if this is gaming's golden age, and I'm starting to lean more toward this being gaming's golden age. If you've got a D&D game going right now and you want to incorporate an assassin in your game, you now have four or maybe five different assassin classes to choose from. You can really have the game you want to have, and I think that's pretty cool.

A POLYHEDRON MINI-GAME OF GENE-ENHANCED ESPIONAGE

DESIGN: RICH REDMAN
EDITING: ERIK MONA
ART DIRECTION/GRAPHIC DESIGN: KYLE HUNTER
COVER: JOHN VAN FLEET

INTERIOR ARTISTS: JEFF CARLISLE · TOM FOWLER · MIKAEL NOGUCHI
MICHAEL HUDDLESTON · CHRIS TREVAS

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This POLYHEDRON d20 System Mini-Game requires the d20 MODERN rulebook to play. POLYHEDRON Mini-Games adapt the standard D&D or d20 MODERN rules and conventions to nonstandard settings and genres. Unless specifically noted in the text, this Mini-Game follows the core d20 MODERN rules. If you know how to play d20 MODERN, you'll pick up the rules of this game in moments. Mecha Crusade utilizes game mechanics developed for the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison and is based on the d20 MODERN *Roleplaying Game*, by Bill Slavicsek, Jeff Grubb, Rich Redman, and Charles Ryan. This Wizards of the Coast game contains no Open Game Content.

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BASED ON THE ORIGINAL DUNGEONS & DRAGONS GAME BY GARY GYGAX AND DAVE ARNESON.

Introduction

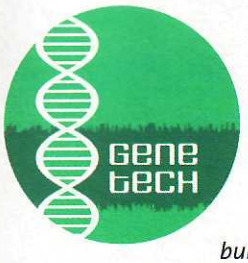
Special Agent Neil Siller waited in the dim basement of the meth lab. Normally a bust like this was DEA territory, but the street said the gang running the house worked for the organizatsiya, the Russian mob. Neil's employer, the INS, believed the organizatsiya had a small number of moreaus, hardcore veterans of conflicts in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Mongolia, and the Ukraine. The new man running this drug den, Ilya Petrosky, had clear signs of orca in his chromosome cocktail. That made it INS business.

Junkies groaned or giggled around Neil as they enjoyed their fix. The place reeked of vomit and worse. The meth gang didn't bother to furnish more than a few rotting mattresses. Neil huddled in a corner, pretending to drowse and trying to be forgettable. Agent Sergei Leonid had volunteered for the inside job, but their boss, Special Agent in Charge Thomas Tse, pointed out the dogs kept by the front door to sniff out moreaus. Neil took comfort knowing that Sergei would come to get him, since the bear moreau could practically knock in the armored front door bare-handed.

Outside, SAC Thomas Tse waited in a battered, nondescript GMC cargo van. Unlike Neil, Thomas wore body armor and carried both a Colt Double Eagle pistol and an HK MP5 submachine gun. Behind him, Agent Leonid tried to remain still, since shifting his weight rocked the van and bruised the other four agents hiding there. Computers rode in pockets on the back of their body armor, wired to various devices around their bodies, including their wrap-around sunglasses. As the rest of his team took positions, an unmanned aerial vehicle about the size of a seagull circled above the block. SAC Tse's computer projected the UAV's transmissions in his sunglasses. Earlier reconnaissance with peanut-sized robot vehicles called "Beetles" pinpointed Petrosky's fourth-floor room. As Thomas watched via the UAV, Agent Ian Davies reached the roof of the building across from Petrosky's window and began setting up his Barrett Light Fifty sniper rifle. Davies was on loan, a token gesture of the DEA's interest. Thomas knew Davies was a veteran of countless skirmishes on the Mexican border and had high confidence in him.

When the DEA sniper was in place, Thomas squirted a "go" signal, using the keypad on this left forearm and the cellular transmitter in the computer. He, Leonid, and the four agents burst out of the van and charged the drug den door while agents at City Light & Power cut the electricity to the block.

When the few lights went out, the guards started shouting in Russian. Neil charged the lone punk watching the junkies. A frank born with lowlight vision, Neil could see before the gangbanger's eyes adjusted to the dark. Knocking him out with a single mikazuki *kick to the jaw, Neil took the punk's Colt 1911 and shoved it in his waistband. Snatching the dropped Mossberg shotgun, Neil headed for the back stairs.*



Even on the first floor, Neil could hear Davies' sniper rifle punching half-inch diameter slugs into the brick and mortar of the building. As long as the DEA agent kept Petrosky bottled up, they had a chance of success. An explosion heralded the arrival of the rest of the team. Neil pounded up the back stairs, making liberal use of the shotgun. The shouts of "INS! Get down!" faded as he headed for the fourth floor. He hoped the 12-gauge would be enough to arrest 300 pounds of furious, trapped orca.

Campaign in Brief

GeneTech, a complete campaign setting for the new *d20 Modern roleplaying game*, adds some science fiction to the techno thriller genre, offering a dark, gritty, and desperate tone to your modern era adventures. Conflicts are torn from the headlines of local and world news. Heroes in a GeneTech campaign believe that they are among the last good people willing to act against the greed and lust for power which they see all around them.

In GeneTech, genetically modified soldiers clash on blood-soaked battlefields, spies scuffle in the shadows, and organizations blur the lines between crime and corporations. Forty years of intense genetic research and experimentation have produced the first generation of moreaus, blends of humans and animals, and franks, genetically altered humans. (Moreaus are described on p. 247 of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game*. Franks appear later in this article.) Most of these genetically altered humans resent their status as property of their creators, and many have sought political asylum in the United States. Faced with prejudice from so-called "normal" humans, many have turned to crime to eke out a living.

GeneTech heroes have the training, ability, and determination to oppose the corporate greed and government apathy destroying their world. The heroes take on this daunting, deadly challenge because somebody has to, and because they didn't fight to escape genetic labs and military training camps just to watch the world circle the drain.

Most people would rather turn on their televisions, open beers, and ignore the warning signs all around them. Pills, booze, and mass media entertainment numb the majority enough to keep the world functioning. Those who try to expose the dangers caused by overpopulation, pollution, depletion of resources, and overwhelming greed face ridicule, scorn, arrest, or far worse at the hands of those who profit from the status quo.

The Heroes' Role

GeneTech characters are intelligent and resourceful, with human weaknesses and foibles. They are not super-human. They are Jack Ryan (*Hunt for Red October, Patriot Games, Clear and Present Danger*) or Indiana Jones (*Raiders of the Lost Ark, Temple of Doom, Last Crusade*), not Conan or the Terminator.

The heroes escaped from a top-secret genetic engineering facility and now must turn their paramilitary skills to making a living while their former masters hound their every step. The heroes may be defectors or refugees, or escapees from a US development facility. They may have defected out of horror at something their former government was doing, or out of a desire for the greater freedom available in the United States. Either way, their former comrades and co-workers now hunt them and the general public regards them with prejudice and suspicion. In the United States, the government denies any military genetic engineering facilities and handles all escapes with discretion and the utmost secrecy. Other governments only deny that such escapes ever happen.

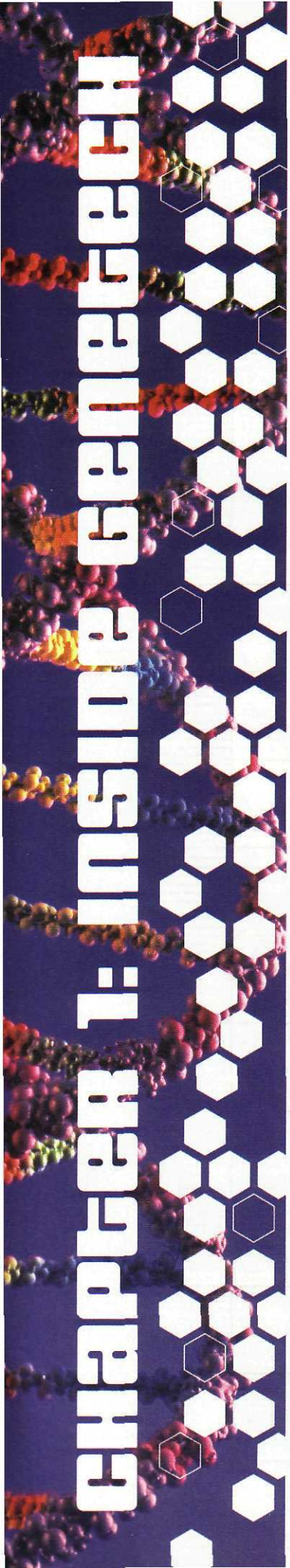
Political unrest, widespread access to weapons of mass destruction, and environmental collapse all contribute to a sense of impending change. Your heroes can affect the outcome of that change, and they find sympathy and support among those groups who have decided peaceful protest is too little, too late. Your heroes are active. Regardless of their motivations, they take action. Even when improving their own personal situations, they find themselves resolving situations with larger implications.

d20 Modern Rules in GeneTech

GeneTech uses none of the FX rules from Chapter Ten of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game*. Instead, it combines cutting edge, high-tech equipment and genetically engineered characters.

The most significant difference between GeneTech and other *d20 Modern* campaign settings is that players build characters using the moreaus found in on p. 247 of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game* and the franks found on p. 30 of this article. That means the characters themselves are the results of genetic engineering. You can design new franks and moreaus using the guidelines offered in the Creating New Races section of Chapter 2: Characters in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Occasionally let your characters take a break from fighting government agencies, international ecoterrorists, and street gangs to hunt monsters in the sewers. Use monsters from Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game* as genetic aberrations and failed experiments. Things like bugbears, deinonychus, gargoyles, gnolls, goblins, kobolds, minotaurs, monstrous flytraps, monstrous spiders, ogres, replacements, trogolodytes, and trolls easily fit the bill as results of genetic science run amuck. With a little imagination, you could even tweak fiends, flesh golems, and vampires to fit the bill. Note that in every case, these monsters are from this world, and speak at least one of this world's languages (see the Language Groups sidebar in Chapter Two: Skills of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game*).



GeneTech is, first and foremost, a techno thriller setting. A techno thriller is a thrilling, fast-paced story set in the present day. Techno thrillers have highly complex plots with a strong sense of urgency that makes the audience (your players) want to rush to the end. In addition, technology plays a key role in the plot and in almost every scene. It is so vital to the plot that if you removed the technology, the plot would collapse. More than just some object the heroes try to acquire, technology is a character in itself. The weapons, equipment, and tools are as interesting as the heroes using them. GeneTech layers secret government development of genetic engineering on top of those traits.

Three Key Traits

Take the real world, add these three twists, and you've got a ready-to-populate campaign setting that's as familiar to Gamemasters and players as our own world, and as fantastic and terrifying as your own imagination can make it. Here's a brief look at how these conceits work in the campaign.

Genetic Engineering Works: In the world of GeneTech, genetic engineering has proceeded far beyond recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH) and genetically engineered medicines. Governments use the humanoid results of these experiments as their shock troops, commandos, and spies. Those that escape their government masters find work "off the books" in corporate espionage and crime.

A gang of rat moreaus run a meth lab and terrorize their slum neighborhood. Egg franks (see Franks, below) use tiny robots for a jewel robbery crime spree. A gigantic albino alligator haunts the sewers and waterfront after scientists performing illegal genetic experiments face a government raid. A multinational energy corporation sends deniable canine moreau agents to provoke a war, stopping construction of a Central Asian oil pipeline. These threats and more slip around the fraying edges of society.

Escape is Possible: Moreaus and franks can, and do, escape. An Underground movement helps them find their way to a United States that denies any creation of such beings and provides asylum, albeit few rights, to those who reach its shores.

A World on the Brink: Years of ecological nonchalance have finally caught up with us, and our biosphere is on the edge irreversible collapse. Details you can drop into your campaign appear below.

Background

In 1953, Chemie Grünenthal synthesized thalidomide in West Germany. A sedative, thalidomide was available in some places until mid-1962. Unfortunately, not only did a percentage of users develop peripheral neuritis, but it also caused startling deformities in fetuses. Untold numbers died, and many continue to suffer from the effects.

If thalidomide could cross the placental wall and affect infants *in uteri*, perhaps other methods could influence the development of embryos positively. The reaction of the United States government to the tragedy was an increased interest in genetic research. Secretly, departments within the National Institute of Health (NIH) and the Department of Energy (DOE) began identifying the approximately 30,000 genes in human DNA, determining the sequence of the 3 billion chemical base pairs that make up human DNA, and developing tools to address the impact of ecological disasters on citizens. All over the world, wealthy nations created their own black budget genetic projects. By 1970, every major world power was involved in a highly secret "gene race."

The desperate need for the results of this research surfaced time and again, as the hazards of chemical landfills made themselves clear in places like the Love Canal neighborhood of Niagara Falls, New York; as the pesticide dioxin proved so harmful to the environment; and as the defoliant Agent Orange proved to cause cancer.

In 1997, embryologist Ian Wilmut and colleagues at the Roslin Institute in Scotland publicly announced the successful cloning of Dolly, a sheep. US President William Clinton issued a moratorium on the use of federal funds for human cloning research in the United States. The same government that hid the existence of the National Security Agency (NSA) in black budget line items, sterilized the mentally retarded and others it considered "undesirable," and denied treatment for syphilis to 399 African-American males, continued its research without public knowledge or scrutiny.

Mikael Noguchi

The primary focus of NIH research was genetically engineering healthier, smarter human beings (franks). The DOE focused on quicker methods of producing tools for the military and intelligence communities (moreaus). By 1985, both projects had stable prototypes brought to term by surrogate mothers. At small, secret bases around the nation, they began raising and training their creations. Similar events happened behind the scenes around the world. The genetically engineered characters found in GeneTech are the first generation of adults raised from the first stable genetic creations.

In the early years of the 21st Century, the world reeled when news media sources flashed images of Macedonian human-animal hybrids unleashed on ethnically Albanian rebels. Questions over how Macedonia could afford the products of such expensive research swiftly followed, and many feared the new genetic superpowers were using regional conflicts to test their creations. In the United States, a groundswell of public opinion rushed the passage of the honorable Mr. Weldon's legislation prohibiting genetic experimentation on human beings. The media quickly dubbed the hybrids "moreaus," from H.G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. When the Israelis revealed a generation of genetically engineered soldiers, the media coined the term "frank," derived from Frankenstein's monster.

The genie was out of the bottle.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

The following themes and background concepts form the foundation of a GeneTech campaign. Understanding them means understanding the basic forces at play upon the lives of your characters and their enemies.

Genetic Engineering

Genetic engineering has varying legal status around the world. In GeneTech's United States, doctors must insure a person's health in embryo. The federal government and the insurance industry help support this medical practice. Choosing gender, eye color, and hair color is also legal, but the financial responsibility lies solely with the parents. More than that is against federal law enforced by a special branch of the National Institute of Health.

Moral and ethical issues surrounding genetic testing and engineering abound. The resolution of these issues will change the world. Since all of your heroes are moreaus or franks, they have a stake in the change. Even the products of normal, random genetics, so-called "pure strain humans," are affected. Genetic testing can reveal an inherited vulnerability to certain diseases or conditions. Insurance companies in GeneTech may legally refuse to insure people based on the possibility of later contracting a disease or condition, creating a caste of "uninsurables."

Ecological Disaster

In 1995, the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California (San Diego) published a report outlining the decline of zooplankton, a vital link in the food chain, off the coast of Southern California over the preceding 42 years. In GeneTech, the warming trend cited in the report, and the decline, continue. Algal "blooms" are visible in the world's oceans. Fish populations are declining, and some people question whether it is too late to reverse the process. Weather is unusually warm and violent around the globe. Sudden torren-

Peripheral Neuritis: A nerve disorder that can occur anywhere in the body. It may begin with a prickly or tingling feeling in the hands, feet, or both, and is followed by sensations of numbness and cold. That numbness spreads and is followed by severe muscular cramps, weakness of the limbs, and lack of coordination. Some of the symptoms may improve or disappear when the cause is removed, but the damage can in some cases remain irreversible. Peripheral neuritis is a form of nerve damage.

tial storms are common and weather-related disasters such as mudslides, hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods increase.

Boundless Greed

Corporations act out of their own self-interest and that of powerful individuals within them. In GeneTech, corporations incite riots to destroy property belonging to rivals or to potential purchases. They finance insurgent movements, "investing" in a government more likely to let them exploit local natural resources and the population, or just to get a more favorable tax structure. Corporations finance their own security and investigation forces, and certainly use franks and possibly even moreaus (out of the public eye, of course).

Increased Violent Crime

Hate crimes, particularly racially motivated violence, increased shortly after the revelation that genetically engineered creations coexisted with "pure-strain humans." New global terrorist groups, calling themselves "Uncorrupted," appeared, taking credit for assaults on sperm banks, medical clinics, genetic laboratories, and various government facilities. Most law enforcement agencies believe that old hate groups simply claim the title Uncorrupted and no global organization exists.

The sense of hopelessness in the face of impending ecological disaster provided a convenient excuse for people with violent tendencies to abandon any pretense of law-abiding lives. With the increase in racial violence, brutal crimes are far more common in GeneTech. Criminals have access to high-quality weapons. Being mugged by someone with an HK or a Glock is more common than being mugged by someone with a .22 zip gun.

The Law

Law enforcement officers routinely wear special response vests on patrol. Their helmets have integrated lights, video cameras, radios, and microphones. Most patrol officers have assault rifles in the trunks of their patrol cars and carry submachine guns if on foot, bike, or mounted patrols.

Popular belief is that all moreaus and franks are trained killers. This heightens tension in every encounter with law enforcement, since officers can never be sure whether they're stopping a frank, a covert moreau, or a human being. While franks and covert moreaus often "pass" as normal humans, other moreaus suffer prejudice and racism at the hands, boots, and clubs of many law enforcement officers.

While it is legal for non-felons in GeneTech to own firearms, there are a number of relevant laws that restrict ownership, transportation, concealed carry, and use. Owning a handgun requires a state handgun license and a three-day "cooling off" period prior to purchase. You may not legally carry a concealed firearm without a concealed carry permit. However, some states allow you to carry a handgun openly without more than a state handgun license. Check your state government's website for laws pertaining to the sale, possession, and concealed carry of firearms in your area—those laws still exist in GeneTech. Note that licenses issued in one state apply only to that state. Heroes intending to cross state lines and continue to carry their firearms legally should apply for licenses in the destination state in advance.

Brandishing a firearm in a threatening manner is assault, a felony. Use of a firearm is assault, manslaughter, or murder, depending on the circumstances. While it is possible to demonstrate self-defense or accident, public opinion in GeneTech's United States is strongly against the use of firearms (except when used by ordinary humans against overt "monsters"). Even military or law-enforcement characters face a hearing after using their firearms. It is a complicated legal situation.

In the United States, possession of a military firearm is legal—if you have a Federal Firearms Class 5 license, meaning you are registered with the United States government as a firearms collector. Such licenses are not issued to felons. A military ID card is not a license to carry any kind of firearm.

Enforcement of these laws is entirely up to the individual officer encountered. An officer may consider a shotgun in the trunk of a car as a concealed firearm, or as a safe place to transport it. One officer may have no particular prejudice against moreaus, while another may hate them. Similarly, the officials in charge of issuing licenses may delay or lose paperwork relating to moreaus.

Power Groups

Just as in the real world, overt and covert organizations manipulate political and cultural events to their own ends. The following groups play definitive roles in a GeneTech campaign. Take a moment to familiarize yourself with each organization and its goals, noting whether each makes a good ally or enemy for your characters and the circumstances in which the player characters might come into contact with it.

Corporations

The needs of multinational corporations drive many world events in GeneTech. They seek favorable tax structures, open markets, customers with money to spend, cheaper labor, and easier access to resources, among other things. They pursue these things ruthlessly; publicly espousing strong moral stances while privately doing whatever is necessary to ensure their business thrives. The only reason multinationals haven't developed their own genetic soldiers and spies is that development takes decades, with further decades required to raise and train the results. The multinationals seek faster returns on their investments. With the massive dislocation of populations caused by ethnic cleansing and the collapse of so many Central Asian and African governments, corporations have a large pool of talent from which to hire.

Criminals

As genetically engineered beings seek refuge, they form a pool of desperate, hungry, poverty-stricken people willing to do anything to improve their situations. Since most of them have backgrounds in espionage or unconventional warfare, organized crime turns their skills and experience to criminal activities whenever possible.

It's worth noting that in GeneTech, many traditional criminal enterprises such as prostitution, smuggling, drug running, drug manufacturing, gambling, and gunrunning now serve as ways to finance political agendas, military operations, terrorist efforts, and more.

Governments

Governments spent billions of dollars over 40 years developing the genetically engineered beings now in use around the world. Those without the resources to develop their own "acquired" them through moles, sleeper agents, and traitors motivated by greed, religion, morality, or reasons of their own.

Governments in GeneTech routinely engage in low-level warfare with each other. While they use all sorts of traditional special operations units to do so, the secret nature of the genetically engineered units means that governments can act far more directly while still denying any involvement in such bellicose actions.

Underground

When the GeneTech campaign begins, the moreaus and franks are not a political power group. The Underground, such as it is, smuggles moreaus and franks out of their native countries and into countries where they have more rights or better treatment, such as the United States. They're still not treated well in the US, but as sources of information, potential double agents, and refugees, they fare better here than elsewhere. The Underground is too small to be a political power and too disorganized to present a unified political front. Internal squabbles and a developing schism between the smugglers and the assassins of the Action Arm (see the Underground, p. 29 of this article) allow world governments to treat the Underground as a bunch of international criminals.

Allies and Opponents

The *Monster Manual* is a great source for unusual opponents in GeneTech. Some suggestions for more human allies and opponents follow. Whether your heroes treat these groups as allies or opponents depends on where you set your campaign and on what they do for a living.

Central Intelligence Agency

The United States CIA functions primarily as a scapegoat for other agencies in the intelligence branch of the government. They run few operations, primarily with franks, though they do borrow moreaus from other agencies when necessary. All operations are highly classified. The CIA regards foreign moreaus and franks within the United States as sources of information, and as potential double agents. When it considers them a threat to national security, it passes responsibility to the FBI. The CIA's charter prevents it from having any official interest in individuals who escape American development facilities. Only those agents with top secret clearance and "need to know" realize such facilities exist.

Department of Energy

The DOE worked in partnership with the National Institute of Health to develop franks and moreaus. Now it focuses on fine-tuning existing moreaus and developing new ones. Because of their expertise, they often send teams to investigate sightings of new moreau strains. Their Nuclear Emergency Strike Teams (NESTs) also make extensive use of moreaus. The DOE works with the FBI to pursue escaped test subjects, and is interested in refugees only if they have information pertaining to, or if they actually are, new strains of moreau. Every DOE employee knows of the Human Genome Project (HGP), but few know of the department's role in its application or of the US government's development facilities.

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Between assisting local law enforcement and those crimes it investigates directly (civil rights, domestic and international terrorism, foreign counterintelligence, organized crime/drugs, violent crimes and major offenders, and white-collar crime); the FBI works harder than ever before. The FBI makes no public use of moreaus or franks, claiming to operate entirely with humans. There is no evidence that Uncorrupted operators have infiltrated the Bureau, despite rumors to the contrary. The FBI regards all foreign refugees as potential security threats. A highly-classified FBI unit actively hunts individuals who escape American development facilities, using human agents and moreaus supplied by the DOE.

Federal Security Bureau

The FSB of the Federation of Russian States is the current incarnation of the KGB. Although Russia is not the power the Soviet Union was, the FSB works very hard to ensure Russian security. It enjoys a great deal of favor with the Russian government and actively seeks ways to gain both military and economic advantages for the *rodina*, the mother country. The FSB uses franks and moreaus equally and openly. The FSB regards foreign moreaus and franks within the Federation of Russian States as sources of information, potential double agents, and possible spies. While the Federation admits to using moreaus and franks, it never admits to escapes, and hunts escapees across borders with total ruthlessness.

Immigration and Naturalization Service

The United States INS has a classified enforcement arm in GeneTech that uses franks and moreaus to hunt others of their

kind who enter the United States illegally. In addition, the INS is involved in all FBI "debriefings" of suspected frank and moreau foreign agents. The INS has no responsibility for those individuals who escape American development facilities, and in fact has no knowledge of such facilities.

Interpol

Little more than an advisory group and information exchange, Interpol is overwhelmed by the cross-border crime occurring in GeneTech. Possessing no moreaus or franks of its own, Interpol would be at a distinct disadvantage if its mission included pursuing and arresting gene-altered felons. Moreaus and franks in the Underground treat Interpol as an opponent. Those working for a government agency or living law-abiding lives ignore it.

Ministry of Public Security (Science and Technology Bureau)

The Ministry is the equivalent of the FBI and the CIA in the People's Republic of China. The Science and Technology Bureau makes avid use of the products of Chinese genetic research, and actively works to acquire genetic secrets from foreign powers. The Ministry uses franks and moreaus openly. It regards foreign moreaus and franks within the PRC as sources of information, potential double agents, and possible spies. While the PRC admits to using moreaus and franks, it never admits to escapes, and hunts escapees even into other nations, with total ruthlessness.

Mossad

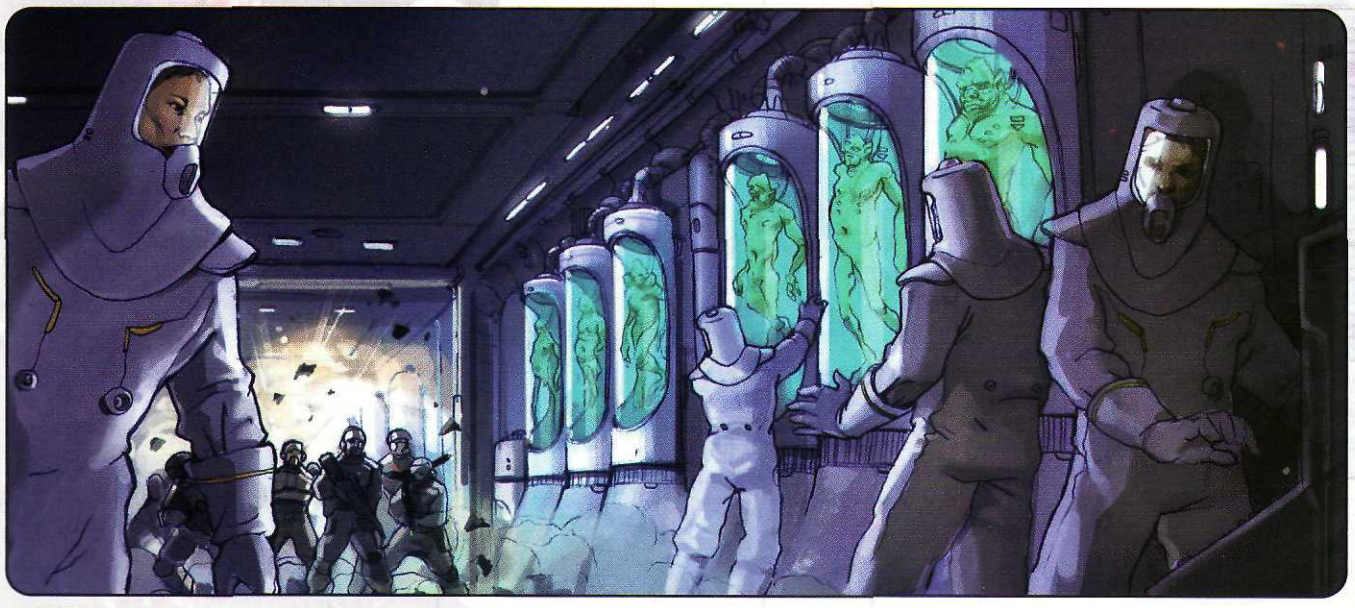
The Institute for Intelligence and Special Tasks, *ha-Mossad le-Modiin ule-Tafkidim Meyuhadim* or Mossad, is Israel's agency for human intelligence collection, covert action, and counter terrorism. Though it focuses on Arab nations, Mossad agents go where their nation needs them. Israel has always been a tiny nation surrounded by enemies, and makes maximum use of every tool available. Franks and moreaus willing to work for the Mossad face an excruciating background check, but if accepted get both important assignments and large rewards. Despite the Israeli military's open use of franks, the Mossad uses moreaus and franks secretly, to prevent even more animosity from fundamentalist Islamic groups. The Mossad takes a keen interest in foreign refugees, treating them as double agents and sources of information at best, and as spies at worst. Because Israel is such a tiny nation, and because its enemies publicly offer enticements to defectors, no escapees from Israeli development facilities remain long in Israel. Those who do escape can expect the tireless agents of the Mossad to track them wherever they go.

Multinational Corporations

Multinational corporations are eager to use the fruits of genetic research, particularly since they didn't have to pay for the development. Multinationals engage in many criminal activities ideally suited for franks and moreaus, including theft and corporate espionage. Treatment of moreaus and franks varies with the corporation, and with the appearance of the individual. Overt moreaus generally receive worse treatment than covert moreaus. Whether or not a corporation pursues defectors depends on the defectors' access to corporate secrets. The greater the access or potential access, the harder the corporation pursues. There are no refugees within corporations, only employees.

National Institute of Health

The United States NIH partnered with the DOE to develop franks and moreaus. Unlike the DOE, the NIH concentrated on franks. Of primary concern to the NIH is the potential for such genetic research to be used for biological warfare. A detailed knowledge of the human genome allows for the creation of biological agents and it is possible that the retro-



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sposons and retroviruses used in DNA grafting could escape, survive, and mutate into something very dangerous. In addition, the NIH works with the FBI to enforce the federal restrictions on genetic manipulation of fetuses. A surprising number of people travel outside the United States while pregnant, eventually spending time in countries with much more relaxed legislation. Such people find themselves the subject of uncomfortably close scrutiny on return. The NIH provides genetic and general health exams for moreau and frank refugees. The NIH has no responsibility for escaped individuals, and not everyone within the Institute knows of the United States' development facilities.

National Security Agency

The NSA, referred to by some as "No Such Agency" since its very existence was a carefully kept secret until the Carter administration, is the ears of the United States. The NSA eavesdrops, cracks codes, enforces United States laws on distribution of cryptographic information, and is becoming more closely involved in Information Warfare (IW). In a GeneTech campaign, the NSA utilizes franks and covert moreaus in a host of top-secret operations. The agency tends to use the CIA as the "fall guy" whenever these operations fail, always attempting to cover its tracks with a near-pathological fervor. It tracks its own refugees with help from the FBI, but assumes no responsibility for those who escape United States development facilities.

Uncorrupted

This generic term refers to any number of "humans first" racist organizations. They engage in terrorist activities and violent crimes. They associate with more traditional racist groups, like the Aryan Brotherhood and Purified Nation, and with many right-wing religious groups. Some groups operate only within their own national borders, while others are part of larger conspiracies. The Uncorrupted are enemies of all moreaus and franks, whether the mutants are agents of the government, political refugees, or escapees from government development facilities. They most commonly target the latter two, since mutants on the run or in hiding tend to have less support and fewer reinforcements.

Underground

Even law enforcement agencies have only heard rumors of this organization. More than likely they will soon know a great deal more. The Underground has two factions. The first helps franks and moreaus escape their government masters and find someplace to live in relative freedom. Some pursue the rewards of service to other governments. Some seek asylum in the United States. Others seek remote locations to hide from the world.

The other faction, known to insiders as the Action Arm, strikes back against the Uncorrupted, whom they view as the most serious current threat to genetically altered humans. The Action Arm reasons that racism is no excuse for murder and terrorism, and that no amount of violence can erase scientific knowledge. The Action Arm of the Underground is staffed almost entirely by franks and moreaus trained as spies and commandoes by one government or another. As the Action Arm increases its operations, many governments regard it, and the Underground by association, as a terrorist group.

Terrorists

Favorite villains for many techno thrillers, terrorist organizations exist all over the world. Some are regional, like the Basque separatists in southern France and northern Spain. Others, like al Qaeda, the PLO, and the IRA cross national borders. Motivated by ideology, politics, ethnicity, religion, or almost anything else, terrorists possess varying degrees of training and resources; many have benefited from CIA, FSB, or Chinese training, used as pawns in the Cold War and then left, forgotten, to tend to their shattered countries. Terrorists tend to avoid using franks or moreaus, since such individuals have at least some indoctrination from their parent government and could be spies or informers. While some terrorists have the resources to perform thorough background checks, many do not, and prefer not to risk moreaus or franks. Unlike the Uncorrputed, not all terrorist groups discriminate against franks or moreaus on ideological or religious grounds.

Department-7 in GeneTech

You can place Department-7 (see the *d20 Modern role-playing game*, p. 6) in any government agency, but there are four particularly good fits. As part of the DOE, working with NESTs and the FBI, Department-7 investigates moreaus and terrorist threats. Department-7 could be the classified enforcement arm of the INS (see below). In your campaign, Department-7 could be the highly-classified FBI unit actively hunting those who escape American development facilities. Finally, Department-7 could be the special branch of the NIH enforcing laws limiting genetic tinkering. No matter where you choose to place Department-7, its officials are aware of the American development facilities, but generally do not inform their agents.

Alternatively, all the heroes work for Department-7. Their missions include espionage, counter-terrorism, and other unconventional warfare tasks. The United States government has several such units, but publicly denies their existence

While all sorts of regular folks inhabit the world of GeneTech, moreaus and franks stand at the center of the setting's most interesting political and paramilitary conflicts. Consequently, all GeneTech heroes must be either moreaus or franks.

Moreaus in GeneTech

Moreaus are animal-human hybrids created by grafting specific sequences of animal DNA to human DNA. It took 40 years of concentrated research to create these few, successful hybrids. All moreaus of the same nationality are descended from the same genetic material. They are all brothers and sisters.

To date, all successful hybrids have been of mammalian stock. Reports of strange creatures glimpsed in wilderness areas, or of bizarre corpses washing ashore, may be the results of unsuccessful attempts to create reptilian, amphibious, or piscine hybrids.

All government laboratories sterilize their moreaus, but stories among members of the Underground suggest that some sterilizations were botched and a limited number of moreaus are now reproducing on their own. Only time will tell if moreau children retain the unique attributes of their enhanced parents.

Moreaus are covered in some detail starting on p. 247 of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game*. The main d20 Modern rulebook offers rules for bat, bear, canine, dolphin, feline, and rat moreaus. GeneTech includes additional rules for orca moreaus, powerful beings created by splicing human genes with the genetic material of killer whales. Future articles in Polyhedron will present additional moreau subtypes.

Being A Moreau: Choose to play a moreau when creating a character and apply the appropriate modifiers to ability scores. As moreaus are born, not created from adults, there is no way to become a moreau during play.

New Moreau Species: Orca

Orca moreaus are a blend of human and killer whale. They tend to be large, bulky people with aggressive personalities and contempt for other species. Because of their almost uncontrollable physical power, aggression, and disdain for their creators, most nations consider this line a failure and instead work with the dolphin strain. However, a number exist and were pressed into various brutal services by their governments.

Overt orca moreaus have distinctive skin patterns, with a dark blue or black back, a white front, and white patterns around their shoulders and on their faces. They have pronounced webbing between their fingers. Overt orcas have tiny external ears. Unlike other overt moreaus, overt orcas tend to be hairless.

Variable Size: Covert and moderate orca moreaus are Medium-size. Coverts and moderates have a 5-foot-by-5-foot fighting space and a 5-foot reach.

Overt orca moreaus are Large. An overt orca moreau has a 10-foot-by-10-foot fighting space and a 10-foot reach.

Hold Breath (Ex): An orca moreau can remain submerged for a number of minutes equal to its Constitution score before needing to surface for air.

Blindsight (Ex): Overt orca moreaus have blindsight with a range of 60 feet on land or water.

Ability Scores: Orca moreaus have the following species modifiers to ability scores:

Covert: +2 Str, -2 Dex.

Moderate: +2 Str, -2 Dex, +2 Int, -2 Cha.

Overt: +4 Str, -4 Dex, +2 Int, -2 Cha.

Character Details: Use the bear moreau entries for height and weight on Table 8-24: Moreau Height and Weight in the *d20 Modern roleplaying game* to determine height and weight for orca moreaus. Use the dolphin entry on Table 8-25: Moreau Age to determine orca moreau ages.

Ilya Petrosky, Covert Orca Moreau Tough Hero 4/Soldier 1: CR 5; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d10+14; hp 46; Mas 14; Init -1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 14, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (-1 Dex, +1 undercover shirt, +4 class); BAB +3; Grap +6; Atk +7 melee (1d6+4 lethal, brass knuckles); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+4 lethal, brass knuckles), or +7 ranged (2d10, Browning BPS); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ Hold breath, blindsight, low-light vision; AL *organizatsiya*; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +2; AP 4; Rep +1; Str 17, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Occupation: Criminal (bonus class skills: Knowledge (streetwise) and Gambling, bonus feat: Brawl).

Skills: Drive +1, Intimidate +6, Knowledge

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(streetwise) +10, Knowledge (tactics) +3, Listen +3, Read/Write (English), Speak (English), Spot +3.

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Brawl, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Streetfighting.

Talents (Tough Hero): Robust, Second Wind.

Possessions: Browning BPS (10-gauge shotgun), 20 rounds of 10-gauge ammunition, 3 Molotov cocktails, brass knuckles, business clothing, overcoat, portable satellite phone.

Franks

Franks, genetically altered humans with enhanced capabilities derived from scientific experiments (rather than overt animalistic genetic influence), can be found in the black ops organizations of governments around the world. Franks come in an almost limitless variety, and generally do not suffer the same prejudices (or difficulties with animals) experienced by moreaus.

Being A Frank: Choose to play a frank when creating a character and apply the appropriate modifiers to ability scores. There is no way to become a frank during play.

Types Of Frank

Though a theoretically infinite number of frank varieties exist, the following list includes many of the most common types:

Eggs: Short for "eggheads," these franks are primarily used as researchers. They have a +2 racial bonus to intelligence, and -2 Constitution. They generally have no other modifications.

Enforcers: Enforcer franks have a +2 racial bonus to Strength, -2 Intelligence, and -2 Charisma. They generally have lowlight vision. Creatures with lowlight vision can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions. Enforcer franks are very popular with organized crime and other groups with a need for leg breakers.

Honeytraps: Honeytrap is a Cold War slang term for using prostitutes to blackmail people with access to sensitive information. Most honeytrap franks work as spies. They have a +2 racial bonus to Charisma, and -2 Wisdom.

Hunters: Hunter franks have a +2 racial bonus to Wisdom and -2 Charisma. They usually have lowlight vision. Creatures with lowlight vision can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Praetorian: Named for the bodyguards of ancient Roman emperors, they have a +4 racial bonus to Constitution, -2 Intelligence, and -2 Charisma. They generally have no other modifications.

Sniper: Sniper franks have a +2 racial bonus to Dexterity, -2 Intelligence, and -2 Charisma. They generally have lowlight vision. Creatures with lowlight vision can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions. Sniper franks find great success in many criminal endeavors.

Frank Description

Franks use the same tables as humans to generate age, height, and weight.

Classes From Urban Arcana

Generally speaking, prestige classes in *d20 Modern* are campaign-specific. However, if you want to add some variety to your game, there are a number of classes from the Urban Arcana campaign setting with at least limited usefulness in GeneTech. Fixer, Street Warrior, and Swashbuckler are advanced classes that can be used with no changes. Celebrity,

Mastermind, Sniper, and Special Forces Operative are prestige classes that can be used with no changes. The trick is in limiting the other advanced classes before any supernatural abilities kick in (unless your campaign combines GeneTech with the supernatural).

Urban Arcana

Advanced Class	Maximum Level
Bounty Hunter	4
Confidence Artist	6
Hacker	7
Thrasher	6

Guerilla Intruder

We have always feared the darkness. Thanks to a combination of government training and genetic experiments, we have another reason. Now assassins and ninjas are joined by Guerilla Intruders. Their genetic gifts let them operate in total darkness without special equipment. They are the bump in the night that makes our blood run cold. For them, night is an ally and a comforting friend.

Select this prestige class if you want your character to excel at stealth and to use hand to hand combat as a killing tool.

The fastest path to this prestige class is through a combination of the Fast basic class and the Infiltrator advanced class, though other paths are possible. Progress in the Guerilla Intruder class can run concurrently with other classes.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Guerilla Intruder, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Skills: Hide 9 ranks, Move Silently 9 ranks, Disable Device 4 ranks.

Feats: Evasion, Stealthy.

Special: The character must naturally possess the blindsight ability, as bat and overt dolphin moreaus do.

Class Information

The following information pertains to the Guerilla Intruder prestige class.

Hit Die

The Guerilla Intruder gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Guerilla Intruder gains a number of action points equal to 5 plus one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Guerilla Intruder's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are as follows.

Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Hide (Dex), Investigate (Int), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Intelligence modifier. Do not subtract 1 from this amount as you would for classes, as this amount already assumes your character is nonhuman.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Guerilla Intruder prestige class.

Combat Martial Arts: At 1st level, the Guerilla Intruder gains Combat Martial Arts as a bonus feat. The Guerilla Intruder gains no additional ability if she already has this feat.

Sneak Attack: If a Guerilla Intruder can catch an opponent when he is unable to defend himself effectively from her attack, she can strike a vital spot with an unarmed attack for extra damage. Any time a Guerilla Intruder's target would be denied his Dexterity bonus to AC (whether he actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), or when the Guerilla Intruder flanks the target, the Guerilla Intruder's unarmed melee attack deals extra damage. The extra damage is +1d6 at 2nd level and an additional 1d6 every two levels thereafter. Should the Guerilla Intruder score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied.

Like the Wind: Beginning at 3rd level, the Guerilla Intruder suffers no penalties to Move Silently checks for moving at more than half speed. In addition the Guerilla Intruder can make Move Silently checks while running or charging, but at a -10 penalty to the check.

No Trace: At 5th level, the Guerilla Intruder knows how to hide his own tracks and may, at his choice, move into "No Trace" mode. All attempts to use the Track feat against the Guerilla Intruder (though not allies) treat the ground as "firm" for purposes of success. In addition, the DCs of any attempts to use Computer Use, Gather Information, Investigate, and

Table 2-1: The Guerilla Intruder

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Defense Special	Reputation Bonus	Bonus
1	+0	+0	+2	+0	Combat Martial Arts	+1	+0
2	+1	+0	+3	+0	Sneak Attack +1d6	+2	+0
3	+1	+1	+3	+1	Like the Wind	+2	+0
4	+2	+1	+4	+1	Sneak Attack +2d6	+3	+0
5	+2	+1	+4	+1	No Trace	+4	+1

Table 2-2: The Patrol Pointer

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Reputation Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+1	+1	+2	+0	Trap Sense (+1)	+1	+0
2	+2	+2	+3	+0	Close Combat Shot	+1	+0
3	+3	+2	+3	+1	Enhanced Scent	+2	+0
4	+4	+2	+4	+1	Trap Sense (+2)	+2	+0
5	+5	+3	+4	+1	Specialization Threat.	+3	+1

Research on matters involving the Guerilla Intruder are increased by the levels of the Guerilla Intruder.

Patrol Pointer

The lead person on a military patrol must have finely honed senses in order to detect booby traps, landmines, and ambushes. Thanks to genetic experimentation, moreaus often fill that dangerous role. With their highly-tuned senses, moreaus are even more adept at discovering trouble in time for the rest of their team to respond with aggression and finality.

Select this prestige class if you want your character to take the lead and use his senses to find trouble before his friends stumble into it.

The fastest path to this prestige class is through a combination of Strong and Fast basic classes and the Soldier advanced class, though other paths are possible. Progress in the Patrol Pointer class can run concurrently with other classes.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Patrol Pointer, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Skills: Hide 4 ranks, Move Silently 4 ranks.

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Alertness, Endurance, Guide, Light Armor Proficiency, Medium Armor Proficiency, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Track.

Special: The character must naturally possess the scent ability, as canine moreaus do.

The character must have Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization with an assault rifle such as the AKM/AK47, HK G3, M16A2, M4 carbine, or Steyr AUG.

Class Information

The following information pertains to the Patrol Pointer prestige class.

Hit Die

Patrol Pointers gain 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

Patrol Pointers gain a number of action points equal to 5 plus one-half their character level, rounded down, every time they advance a level in this class.

Class Skills

The Patrol Pointer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are as follows:

Climb (Str), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Intelligence modifier. Do not subtract 1 from this amount as you would for classes, as this amount already assumes your character is nonhuman.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Patrol Pointer prestige class.

Trap Sense: Starting at 1st level, the Patrol Pointer gains an intuitive sense that alerts him to danger from traps, giving him a +1 bonus to Reflex saves made to avoid traps and a +1 dodge bonus to AC against attacks by traps. At 4th level this bonus increases to +2. These bonuses stack with trap sense bonuses gained from other classes.

Close Combat Shot: At 2nd level, the Patrol Pointer gains the ability to make a ranged attack with a Large or smaller firearm while in a threatened area without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Enhanced Scent: At 3rd level, the Patrol Pointer becomes more attuned to his sense of smell. He can detect opponents within 40 feet by sense of smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 80 feet; if downwind, it drops to 20 feet. Strong scents, such as smoke or rotting garbage, can be detected at twice these ranges. Overpowering scents, such as troglodyte stench, can be detected at triple normal range. The Patrol Pointer must still be within 5 feet of an opponent to pinpoint that opponent's location. The Patrol Pointer also gains a +2 competence bonus to follow tracks by smell.

Specialization Threaten: At 5th level, the Patrol Pointer may threaten nearby areas with a chosen firearm in the same fashion as he would with a melee weapon. The firearm effectively functions as a reach weapon that may affect anything up to 30 feet away. Any attacks of opportunity received by threatening these areas are treated as ranged attacks, and count against the maximum number of attacks of opportunity that round.

The Patrol Pointer may use this ability only with firearms with which he has Weapons Specialization.

Chapter 3: Adventures

GeneTech adventures explode from the headlines. They include features such as terrorism, black-market weapons, environmental exploitation, Third World insurrection, corporate espionage, religious fanaticism, hate crimes, drug trafficking, slavery and the smuggling of refugees, and the illegal use of genetic technology. See Campaign Setup and Stand-Alone Adventure Setups, below, for some examples. Writing and running techno thriller adventures requires special attention to some key areas. Reward actions that fit the genre. If characters use resourcefulness, tenacity, and wit, reward them with additional clues, bending the rules, or altering the adventure in small ways.

Outlines & Structure

Thrillers use complex plots. Make a simple chart showing the connections between the events, people, and bits of information that characters may encounter. It should have at least one route from the beginning of the adventure to the end, and preferably two or more. Players should never know there was more than one way to succeed.

Build a timetable for the villains' plot. Know the villains' resources. Make sure who knows what among your NPCs. If you need an NPC to have a piece of information to keep the pace of the adventure quick, a good outline will tell you which NPC has that information and how. Outline the events the heroes get from news reports and other sources, and where those clues lead. Include the clues they get from investigating. There should be a difference between what the villain does and what the heroes perceive, at least at first.

Complicate things. An NPC who hires the heroes to foil an assassination plot may be a criminal hiring them to interfere with a government investigation, or with another criminal's takeover attempt. Even when the plot is straightforward, weather, equipment breakdowns, unexpected interest from third parties, detours, and so forth complicate simple adventures.

Pacing

A techno thriller is first and foremost a thriller. It must be fast paced. The consequences of failure should have an immediate impact on the heroes, though they don't have to save the world every adventure.

NPCs

Use NPCs to reinforce the tone of the genre. Give them interesting traits and appropriate settings. There's a sense that common people have given up on changing things. Even well-meaning government officials, from law-enforcement to mayors and governors, may be unable to influence circumstances for the better. People with the enhanced characteristics shared by the heroes, however, can make concrete changes for the better.

Don't spend a lot of time detailing an NPC that heroes encounter once. If heroes encounter an NPC a second time, emphasize traits you already described and add another detail or two. Reveal the NPC over a period of time. Every now and then, throw the heroes a curve. Have an NPC they need be a real jerk. Have a villain act politely and be kind to children and small animals.

The next time you're in a crowd, take notes on the one or two people who immediately attract your attention. There are a few in every crowd, and describing people like them to your players provides memorable detail. Crowds themselves can be characters. Many adventures occur in crowded, urban settings. Crowds react to things, often in dangerous ways. Mobs and riots having nothing to do with the adventure may complicate things.

Pets act in unpredictable ways that can make them a danger to themselves, the heroes, or innocent bystanders. A berserk seeing eye dog can complicate a scene. Conversely, meeting an NPC draped in a pet boa constrictor sets a different tone than meeting one in a white suit feeding a parrot. In GeneTech, animals generally react poorly to moreaus, even coverts, but not to franks. If you know an animal's behavior well, put one in your adventure and have it react as if threatened when a moreau is near. Use that to warn the heroes, or the NPCs, and to reinforce the setting.

Idiots generally don't pass the qualification tests to become law enforcement officers, even if you don't like the last one that gave you a traffic ticket. Make law enforcement a real threat to the heroes. A detective or FBI

Tom Fowler

agent who believes the heroes guilty of crimes but has no proof makes a good recurring character until his lack of proof becomes a joke.

Create opponents to challenge your particular heroes. Create one or two recurring opponents who always manage to escape. If not from the heroes, then from incarceration later.

Technology

Every scene should emphasize that technology is a powerful tool. Place clues in computers that a hero must hack. Stage an encounter in a dark forest or underground complex in which night-vision gear gives heroes the edge.

Stick to what you know. If that gets repetitive, research fields unknown to your players. Don't let technical details bog down pacing, but make sure the details you do use are correct. Take notes when watching movies or television. The film *Along Came a Spider* mentions an encoding program that hides text messages in the binary code of GIF images. You might use that, hiding complex information on a CD of innocent-seeming music or software, or even on videotape.

GeneTech Robots

Robots are quite common in GeneTech, where they are primarily used for hazardous materials handling and reconnaissance. The following two specific robots are perhaps most common.

"Beetle" Reconnaissance Robot: Use the diminutive robot described in Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game* for basic statistics. The beetle uses the quadruped frame (Speed 30 feet), though in fact it has six legs. It has no attacks. It does have audio-visual sensors and a 300-foot remote control link. The beetle is programmed with the Climb skill (5 ranks, and it uses its Dexterity bonus to climb, for a total skill bonus of +7).

Seagull Unmanned Aerial Vehicle: Use the tiny robot described in Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game* for basic statistics. The UAV uses the bipedal frame with a few changes (Speed 20 feet, Fly 40 feet (good)). It has no attacks. It does have audio-visual sensors and a 300-foot remote control link. The UAV is programmed with the Move Silently skill (5 ranks, and it receives a mastercraft bonus, for a total skill bonus of +10).

See the Techie in Chapter Six: Advanced Classes of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game* for more information on robots.

Mean Streets: Sample Campaign Setup

While the types of GeneTech campaigns you can run are as unlimited as the political and racial conflicts present in the modern world, the following sample campaign, which starts in a repressive government training facility and ends in a man-hunt on the streets and rooftops of a major city, highlights many of the most important and compelling themes likely to come up in the world of GeneTech and serves as the beginnings of a much longer campaign.

The campaign requires a wilderness area and an urban area. As the GM, pick an urban area you know well. If you don't spend much time in the city, choose an urban area your players don't know and pick up a travel book about the city in a used book store, or look up street maps and other information on the Web. Pick a wilderness area at least as close to your urban area as to any other. The heroes begin as 1st-level franks and moreaus in training at a secret INS facility in the wilderness who escape and make new lives in the city.

CONSIDER THIS

Before you begin the campaign, you must decide how the INS tracks its moreaus and franks. If it uses tattooed bar codes, it will be much harder for the INS to track the heroes after they escape the secret facility in which the campaign begins. If it uses embedded microchips, the heroes may not know the chips exist. Such chips can be read by anyone with the proper equipment, provided they are close enough (within 5 feet) of the chip. A new, secret technology that allows the microchips to transmit a radio frequency response to a query signal makes tracking the heroes for the final confrontation easier if that transmission reaches up to a mile.

CAMPAIGN STAGE 1: BREAKOUT

At the beginning of the first campaign stage, the PCs are prisoners in a top-secret military training center specializing in educating frank and moreau agents in the rudiments of tracking their own kind. It ends with the heroes on the run from their former captors.

THE TRIGGER

Read or paraphrase this opening scene to the players to get the action going:

You are trainees at a government camp. You don't know where in the United States you are, but the camp is surrounded by wilderness. You live in 5-foot-by-10-foot rooms. Forty of you live at the facility. You've been in camps like this all your life, and now you're adults. You've never seen a television broadcast or read a newspaper. You've heard the soldiers' radios in brief snatches before they, or you, got caught. You know they're training you to be soldiers, special soldiers, working in teams with other moreaus and franks. In fact, this facility is experimenting with different combinations of moreaus and franks to see what combinations make the most effective teams. The people here are cruel to you and your friends. Before, when you were children, you felt helpless. Recently you realized that in many ways you are better than those guarding you, and you're fed up with the petty cruelty and racism. When you found out you were training to hunt others like you, you decided to seize your freedom. Using codes you developed as children, you are planning escape. Take some time to talk about how and when you want to do it. Ask me questions about your situation, then make a break for it.

THE SETTING

The facility itself is 1,000 feet across and surrounded by a 10-foot high, electrified (2d6 points of electricity damage each round in contact with the fence) chain-link fence, with strands of barbed wire at the top. The fence has to keep people in and out, so there are two sets of barbed wire strands, one slanted in and one slanted out. Climbing the fence is simple (DC 5), but crossing the barbed wire requires a Reflex save (DC 10) to avoid taking 1d4 points of damage and becoming stuck in the fence (a hero can tear loose by taking an additional 1d4 points of damage or by making a DC 10 Escape Artist check). Guard towers are positioned at each corner of the compound and on each side of the gates.

Wilderness training areas surround the central compound. The perimeter fence is five miles in any direction from the chain-link fence surrounding the central compound. The outer fence is identical to the inner one. A dirt road runs around the outside of the outer fence. The dirt road runs to and from the main entrance to the wilderness area, a simple wooden bar across the road with an information hut, a guard barracks, and a motor pool. To the uninformed, it looks like private logging land.

SECURITY

Two soldiers are in each guard tower, one manning a searchlight and the other manning an M-60 machinegun. Two soldiers man the front desk in the lobby of the main building. Four soldiers work the ground floor security center, and four soldiers work the underground security center. They work three shifts per day. Another 122 soldiers patrol the compound, work in the armory or motor pool, or guard the trainees (franks and moreaus) during classroom or field training.

In addition, 4-soldier teams in AM General Hummers patrol the outer fence. A patrol passes any point along the fence once an hour. Use them to increase the drama and danger of the escape, or to provide a vehicle they can hijack. The patrols' barracks and motor pool are at the main entrance to the wilderness area.

If an alert sounds, all shifts report for duty. Patrols pass any point along the outer fence every fifteen minutes. Four-soldier foot patrols walk outside the inner fence, each patrol just in sight of the one in front of it. Expect three times as many guards at the security posts and centers, but no more than two in any of the towers.

ADMINISTRATION

Twenty scientists and five technicians work in the facility, running medical tests and planning the development of new strains of frank and moreau. Ten administrators provide leadership. In alerts, administrators report to the security centers and take command. The scientists and technicians remain in their quarters.

PERSONNEL

Use low-level Strong/Tough ordinaries for soldiers, but substitute Advanced Firearms Proficiency for Brawl. They wear light-duty vests during their active shifts and carry stun guns, tear gas grenades, zip-tie handcuffs, FN Five-SeveN pistols, and FN P90 submachineguns (see below for descriptions and statis-

tics). They have one spare magazine for their pistols and four spare magazines for their submachine guns. Patrols outside the compound wear fatigues, fatigue jackets (if appropriate for the location and time of year), and mesh vests. Those patrols carry night-vision goggles (night patrols only) professional walkie-talkies, electro-optical binoculars, chemical light sticks, GPS receivers, tactical maps, and search-and-rescue kits.

Use low-level Smart/Charismatic ordinaries for the administrators. They carry FN Five-SeveN pistols and wear light undercover shirts. Use low-level Smart/Dedicated ordinaries for the scientists and technicians. They do not wear armor and do not carry weapons.

Adventure Goals

The goal is to escape the central compound, cover the 5 miles of surrounding rough, wilderness terrain, get over that fence, and hitch a ride to the city. Once in the city, heroes can disappear into the population (if they are franks or covert moreaus) or hide in abandoned buildings or sewers (if they are moderate or overt moreaus). Let your players figure out their own escape plan, but here are two suggestions to nudge your players along, or to prepare you for their schemes.

Fire

Heroes can start a fire using the lights in their cells and their mattresses or clothes. If a fire starts in the main building, the soldiers evacuate the trainees to the parade ground in front of the main building. Patrols don't increase around either fence, so if the heroes can make it over the fence without being spotted, they have an hour before anyone can bring order to the chaos and take a headcount.

Security Force Weapons: The soldiers carry weapons made by Fabrique National (FN), a Belgian company. Both use the same ammunition, a 5.7mm x 28mm round specially developed for both weapons. This simplifies the logistics required by the compound. The Five-SeveN pistol is a semi-automatic pistol with a box magazine in the grip and a polymer frame. The P90 submachine gun is a unique looking weapon, with a transparent polymer magazine that sits directly above the barrel of the weapon. The cartridges are aligned 90-degrees from the barrel axis, and each magazine has a built-in ramp that rotates the cartridge to align it with the barrel prior to chambering it.

Field Training

During field training, trainees have the proper clothing for the current weather, compasses, mesh vests, tactical maps (these only show the interior of the training area, but can be used to navigate to the outer fence), chemical light sticks, and professional walkie-talkies. Field training takes place both day and night. It's relatively easy for two or three heroes to ambush one of the two-soldier teams watching the training, creating an opportunity to acquire weapons and make a break for it. The drawback is that their absence is obvious in about five minutes.

Experience Points

Between the escape plan, critical skill checks during the escape, encounters with patrols, encounters in the wilderness, and skill checks to survive and navigate, heroes should earn enough experience points to reach 2nd level.

Campaign Stage 2: Welcome Wagon

When heroes arrive in the city, they face several immediate problems. They have no money, they have no place to live, and they have no jobs. If they're willing to turn to crime, they'll have no problem finding money but they will have trouble with the police. They can squat in any abandoned building, if they're willing to put up with rats, roaches, drug addicts, other squatters, no electricity, and no running water. There are many such places in the moreau slums of the city. Depending on who they befriend or offend, and depending on their appearance, they may be able to find work—honest or otherwise.

Some heroes may decide to sell their story of being raised in secret, US government facilities to the media for the money they need to start over. If they do so, you may want to run the third installment of the campaign (Outbreak, see below) as you run this adventure. The only media source willing to buy their story should be the sort that runs stories about bat boys and Elvis sightings. If the heroes ask about their story, tell them it

Jeff Carlisle

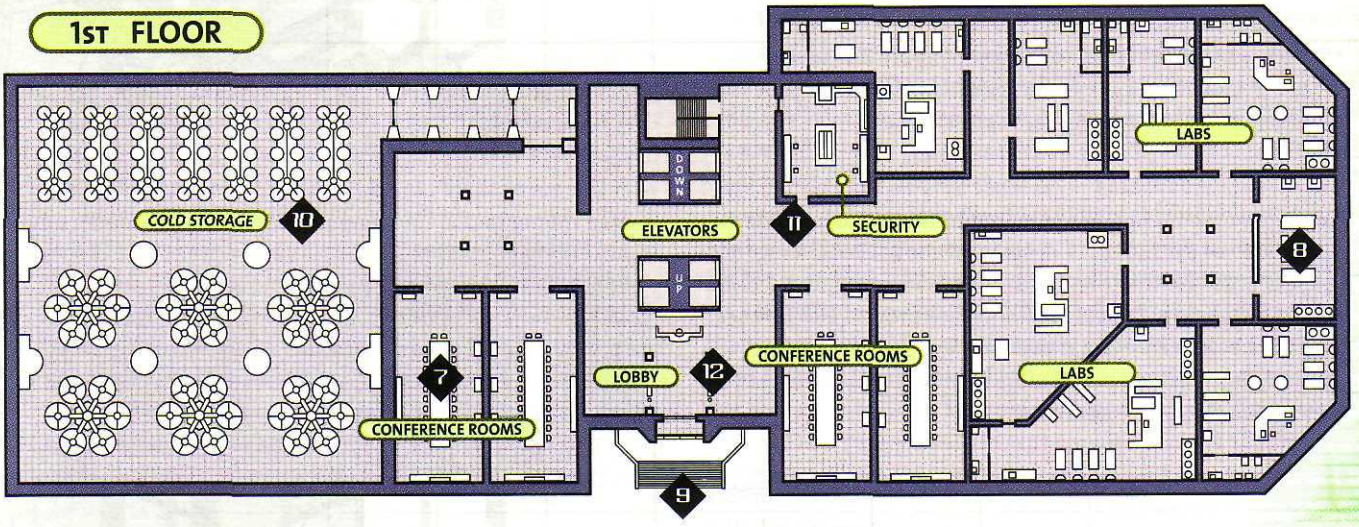
Name	Damage	Crit.	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Purchase Magazine	Size	Weight	DC	Restriction
Five-SeveN[1]	2d8	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S	20 box	Small	1.5 lb.	20	Res (+2)
P90[1]	2d8	20	Ballistic	70 ft.	S, A	50 box	Large	8 lb.	21	Res (+2)

1. This mastercraft weapon grants a +1 bonus on attack rolls.

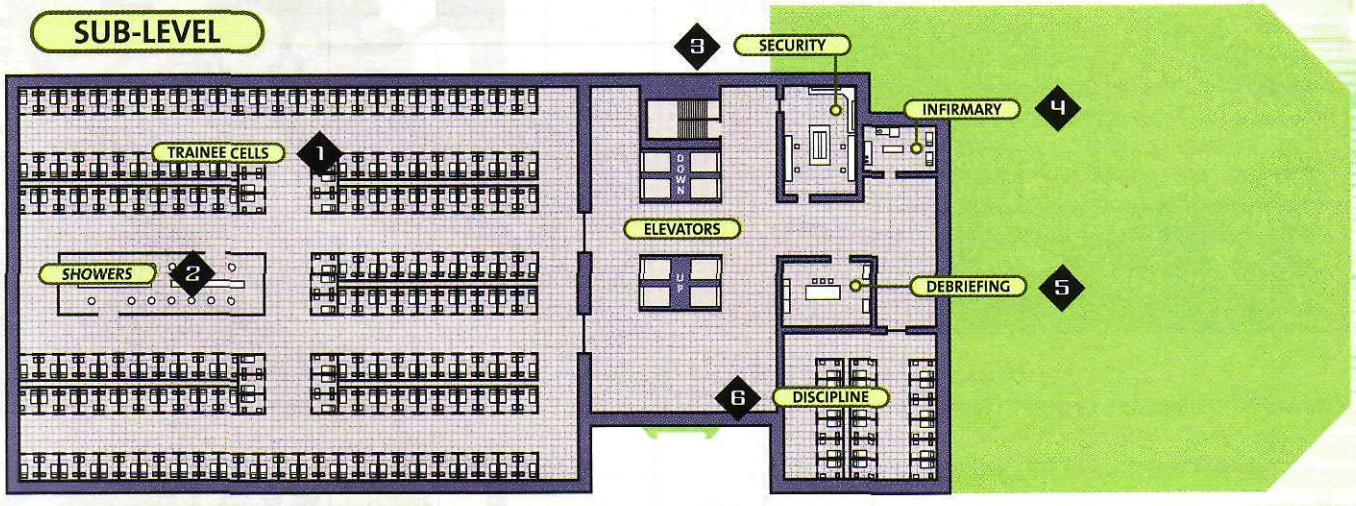
gene tech

2ND FLOOR

1ST FLOOR



SUB-LEVEL



Chris Trevas

still hasn't appeared in whatever media (television, newspaper, etc.) bought it. If they investigate further, tell them the person who interviewed them died. The circumstances of the death should be questionable, but not obviously murder. Meanwhile, no one in the media will talk to them anymore because the INS has terrified them into silence. All they have really accomplished with their limited resources is to let the INS know in which city they are hiding.

MAP KEY

CENTRAL BUILDING

All floors are concrete. Doors are wooden unless noted otherwise. Light is provided by fluorescent fixtures on the ceiling.

E1. ELEVATORS. (Down only.)

E2. ELEVATORS. (Up only.)

1. TRAINEE CELLS. These cells have metal doors with hinges and locks on the outside. Cells contain a footlocker, a sink, a toilet, and a fold-down cot.

2. SHOWERS.

3. UNDERGROUND SECURITY CENTER. Here, four guards monitor the underground rooms (including the cells) via close-circuit television. There are 10 tear gas grenades and a box of 25 zip-tie handcuffs in this room.

4. INFIRMARY. There's little more equipment here than there is in a school nurse's office.

5. DEBRIEFING. This room has three chairs and a conference table.

6. DISCIPLINE. These tiny cells are for those who require punishment for infractions.

7. PUBLIC CONFERENCE ROOMS. These rooms have carpeting, conference tables, and comfortable chairs.

8. LABS. These ground floor laboratories are for cellular-level experiments.

9. ENTRY HALL.

10. COLD STORAGE. This room contains freezers and cryogenic storage for genetic material.

11. GROUND FLOOR SECURITY CENTER. Four guards monitor the ground and second floor rooms. This room also contains communication gear for all patrols, guard towers, and other buildings.

12. FRONT DESK AND LOBBY. This is the public face of the facility, used by visiting officials from the INS and other government agencies.

13. HOSPITAL. This room handles injuries incurred in the course of training, but has only two beds for in-patient care. Other patients simply pass the healing time in their cells.

14. VAT ROOM. This room contains artificial wombs for growing new franks and moreaus.

15. INFANT CARE. Here moreaus and franks too young to care for themselves receive minimal attention.

THE CENTRAL COMPOUND

1. MAIN BUILDING. (Two stories plus subterranean level.)

2. MOTOR POOL AND GARAGE. (Single story.)

3. VR TRAINING, CLASS ROOMS, AND GYM. (Two stories.)

4. DINING HALL AND KITCHEN. (Single story.)

5. BARRACKS AND ARMORY. (Two stories.)

6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL QUARTERS.

7. PARADE GROUND.

8. GUARD TOWERS.

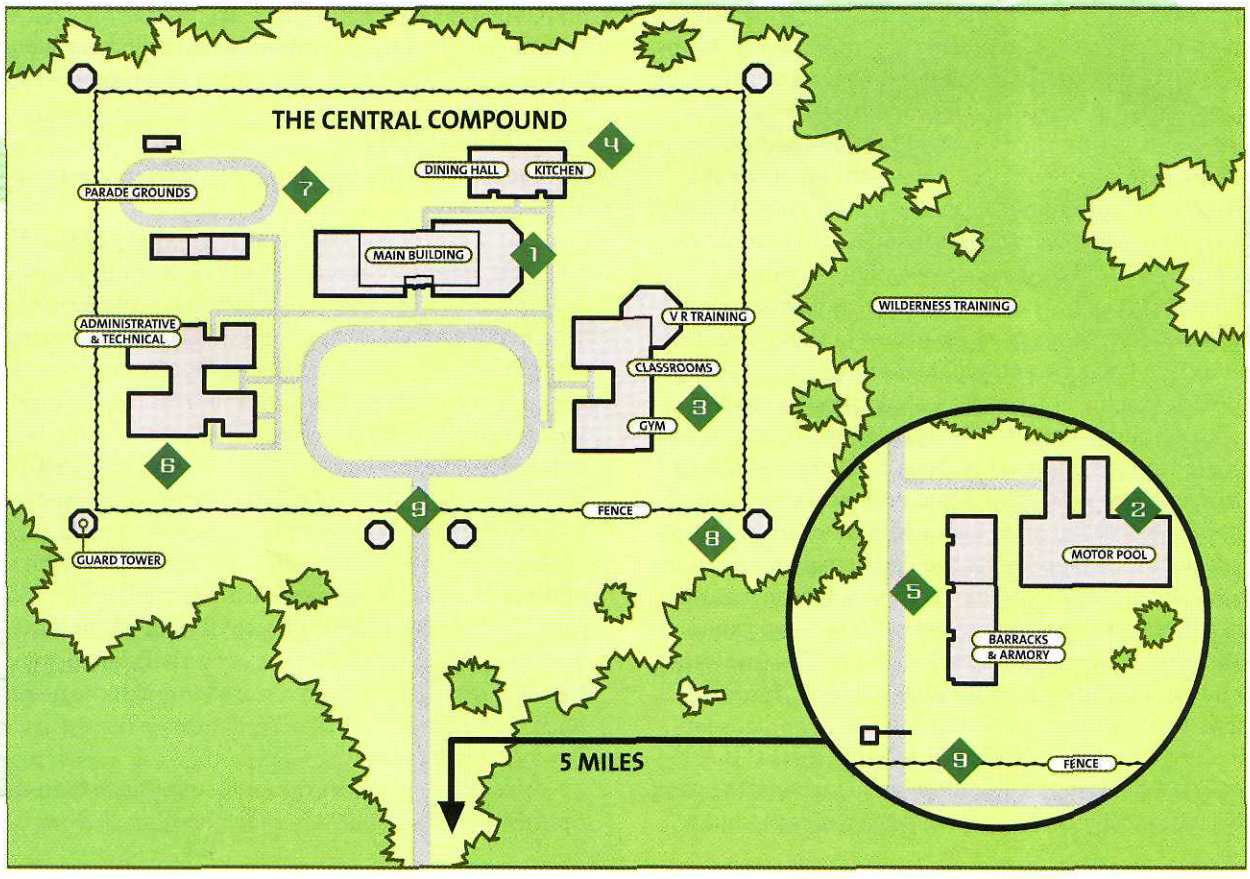
9. GATES.

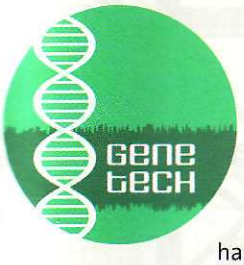
ADVENTURE GOALS

This part of the campaign introduces the difficulties faced by moreaus and franks in the form of racism and poverty. Introduce sympathetic shopkeepers and charity workers, honest cops from whom the heroes must conceal their identities, and corrupt cops who harass the poor because they enjoy it. One possible adventure during this time of adjustment follows.

BACKGROUND

For two weeks, members of a local street gang, the Circle Eights (substitute another gang from recent headlines in your game's home city if appropriate), have methodically terrorized the residents of one city block. The neighborhood has a high moreau population, and the gang members treat moderate and overt moreaus more brutally than other residents.





Last week the violence escalated. Residents, particularly overt moreaus, began "jumping out" windows, "dropping" hair dryers into bathtubs full of water, and leaping from rooftops. The authorities label the deaths as suicides, but most neighborhood residents believe that's to avoid spending any more time in the neighborhood investigating. In fact, acts of violence against law enforcement officers increased about the same time the "suicides" began. Members of the Circle Eights, their identities and affiliation unknown to residents or the police, began hurling chunks of brick, concrete, and cinderblock from rooftops onto patrol vehicles. Police patrols are noticeably scarcer in the last few days. The violence may escalate to Molotov cocktails, or even shooting.

Many people are leaving. Some are gearing up for vigilante revenge. Local taverns fill with drunken talk of neighborhood patrols and payback. No one knows what the Circle Eights want, but the mood is getting ugly. The night the adventure starts, the Circle Eights kill an overt rat moreau and throw her off a roof. This sets the scene for a dramatic initial encounter with chases, fights, and shoot-outs on the rooftops.

SUPPORTING CAST

The weather is a major part of the supporting cast for this adventure. Decide whether the precipitation is rain or snow based on the season of your adventure and the location. Either reduces visibility by half, resulting in a -4 penalty to Spot and Search checks. The severe winds automatically extinguish any unprotected flames, cause protected flames (such as lanterns) to dance wildly and 50% of the time extinguishes them. Listen checks are at a -4 penalty. You may impose a -4 penalty on Balance, Climb, Jump, or Tumble checks if some part of the movement is exposed to the full force of the wind. See the Dungeon Master's Guide and Chapter Seven: Gamemastering of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game* for additional information on heat dangers, cold dangers, and weather hazards.

The neighborhood is another important supporting character. This adventure occurs in a low-income housing neighborhood of your urban area. The buildings are 5–12 stories tall. All have rusting iron fire escapes. Makeshift bridges of two-by-fours connect some rooftops. Old steam pipes about two feet in diameter connect some walls. Occasionally heroes should have to leap across eight-to-ten-foot wide alleys. Buildings have narrow ledges (no more than a foot wide) around them. Chase sequences and gunfights should alternate between the rooftops and apartment interiors. Scenes in apartments are opportunities for colorful, quirky NPCs, offering opportunities for greenhouses, pigeon coops, and other hobbies. One local might be assembling a car on his roof, or a boat. Throw in antennas, treat clotheslines as traps, and let neon signs provide the only illumination.

The Circle Eights are rabidly anti-moreau humans. The gang members are mostly low-level Fast/Tough ordinaries, but a few lieutenants are mid-level. The gang's leader is a mid-level Strong/Charismatic ordinary (make him a Heroic GM character using the rules at the end of Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game*). They have typical equipment for their character type and level.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Before running this adventure, decide where it happens and at what time of year. The neighborhood should be home to the heroes, which should narrow your choices of location. Those decisions affect what kind of weather complicates the plot and the action.

What do the Circle Eights want with that city block? Do they want the buildings for a combination of gang headquarters, drug factory, crack house, and general crime center? Someone could be paying the Circle Eights to commit this mayhem. If so, who? Are they trying to incite the moreau population to violence? A media-savvy villain could turn moreau violence from self-defense to a threat to "normal" humans throughout the city. Or perhaps the mastermind behind the Circle Eights has an interest in real estate, or in Prohibition-era loot buried under one of the buildings.

Do the heroes know the rat moreau whose death triggers the adventure? What's the relationship?

If the heroes took weapons from the INS soldiers at the camp and they use them on the Circle Eights or other opponents, the police quickly identify the caliber and weapons. The 5.7mm round is illegal for civilian use or ownership, so it sets off alarm bells in every law enforcement database, gaining the attention of the very people from whom the heroes escaped.

THE TRIGGER

Read or paraphrase this opening scene to the players to get the action going:

It's a wet, miserable evening. You're returning home from a hard day of work, or looking for work. You're frustrated by the lousy economy and the fear, ignorance, and hatred of the low-level corporate drones and civil servants you dealt with all day. Your crummy apartment isn't much, but even the company of roaches sounds better than the day you had. Then things get worse.

A few yards ahead of you, the corpse of an overt rat moreau drops to the sidewalk with a sickening thud. A snatch of laughter makes you look up, and you catch a glimpse of a pale face disappearing from the edge of the roof. The rat moreau doesn't move. Death might be a blessing after that fall. Rumors of murders hastily made to look like suicides have circulated through the neighborhood for the last week or so, but this is the first evidence you have seen.

The cops have better things to investigate than the death of a rat moreau, even in neighborhoods in which

they're less likely to get killed. Mood in the neighborhood is ugly, lately. Residents are angry, blaming the Circle Eights, a local street gang, for the violence and the police for not stopping it. You've heard talk about forming lynching parties and vigilante patrols. That kind of violence will only make the public and the authorities crack down on the residents. If anyone's going to stop this before it gets out of hand, it's going to be you. What do you do?

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Between story awards for finding a place to live and dealing with the gang violence, and with encounters with gang members (not to mention critical skill checks to avoid dying on the rooftops), heroes should finish this adventure with enough experience points to reach 3rd level.

CAMPAIGN STAGE 3: OUTBREAK

In the third installment of the campaign, INS agents arrive in the city and begin looking for the heroes. If the heroes used the weapons they took from the facility, the agents know the escapees are in the city. Otherwise they are looking in several cities at once and call on the police and military to cordon off the moreau neighborhoods, then go door to door, room to room, and building by building.

By now, the players know where their characters live. They know who their characters' neighbors are, and they think they know who their characters can trust. It's best to run this installment alongside some other adventure, giving the impact time to register. For example, you might want heroes working as bicycle messengers or drug couriers to discover for themselves the impact of barricades manned by soldiers claiming to be National Guard troops.

ADVENTURE GOALS

Your players, and their characters, knew that someone would come looking for them. Here is a way to deal with that. You decide whether you want to create an ongoing campaign opponent in the INS or whether you use this installment of the campaign to resolve the hunt for the escapees.

QUARANTINE

The city government claims there's been an outbreak of an unidentified disease among moreaus.

THE TRIGGER

Read or paraphrase this opening scene to the players to get the action going:

Television news segments are full of medical personnel rushing ill-looking moreaus through hospital corridors. Doctors on TV say that some strange new disease has appeared in your neighborhood. No one you know is sick, and no one you know has heard of a moreau falling ill from something strange. The mayor says she has asked the governor for National Guard troops to quarantine your neighborhood until the disease can be identified and a treatment sought.

As heroes begin to explore the cordon thrown up around their home neighborhood, they notice that the "National Guard" troops have a lot of unusually high-tech communications equipment, and that a lot of people in dark suits and sunglasses mingle with the soldiers, people who look suspiciously like INS agents.

INFECTION

Rather than searching the buildings themselves, the INS uses robots. Use the Beetle reconnaissance robot detailed earlier in this article. Search teams consist of two AM General Hummers and a command truck (use the statistics for a moving truck from Chapter Four: Equipment in the *d20 Modern roleplaying game* if they become important) pulls up in front of a building and a team of soldiers and agents unloads 20 Beetles and turns them loose. The Beetles move through the building as directed by technicians in the command truck, who have blueprints for the buildings in their onboard computers. If the Beetles' audio-visual sensors pick up a heat source large enough to be a person, the technicians identify the room and soldiers from the Hummers move to the heat source's location and check the person's identity. Anyone who witnesses, or is subjected to, one of these searches immediately notices that there are no medical personnel present. That's very strange considering the National Guard is supposed to be assisting in pinpointing the outbreak point of the disease.

EXCISION

At some point, the heroes either run, or attack their pursuers. If they run, let informers and frightened neighbors point the INS in the direction they went. Pick a compelling location from the heroes' route and stage the final encounter there. This is an excellent opportunity to introduce the agent in charge of locating and silencing the heroes as an ongoing campaign villain, if you so desire. Just make sure he, or she, escapes the shooting!

If the heroes attack, you need a compelling location in your chosen city for their enemies' headquarters. An abandoned warehouse, an idle construction site, an unused commuter train station, a dark and empty parking garage, or a train or bus yard all make good locations for the agents' vehicles, computers, communication gear, and holding cells. Remember, the INS doesn't want the press seeing what's really going on. They'll pick an isolated, nondescript place for this operations center.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Plan sufficient encounters and critical skill rolls, as well as story awards for accomplishing the adventure goals, to provide suffi-

cient experience points for the heroes to reach 4th level.

Stand-alone adventure setups

The following short adventure ideas can be used to enhance the "Mean Streets" sample campaign or can be used as single-night diversions for any GeneTech campaign.

Blinders

Heroes must disable a SAM missile site in a Central Asian city in this low-level GeneTech adventure.

Background

Turkmenistan has extensive hydrocarbon and natural gas reserves. Unfortunately, the biggest consumers are in the West. To export oil, Turkmenistan ships across the Caspian Sea to the Azerbaijani port of Baku. From there the oil flows through the Caspian Oil Pipeline across Iran to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan in Turkey. Azerbaijan has its own oil supply that also uses the pipeline. The pipeline provides a tremendous economic boost for Iran, much to the dismay of the Saudi Arabian government. Iran and Saudi Arabia remain locked in a struggle for leadership of the Muslim world.

Azerbaijan plans to raise the tariff on imported oil again. Turkmenistan plans to sabotage Azerbaijan's offshore oilrigs as part of a larger campaign against Iran and its ally, the People's Republic of China. Such action could quickly escalate into a regional war. Many oil-importing governments have an interest in ensuring that this doesn't happen.

In response to increasing tensions between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, the Turkmenistan government lines its coast with surface-to-air missiles and truck-mounted anti-aircraft radar. Most of the equipment is Soviet-surplus, picked up for a song from Kazakhstan. Despite its age and relative inefficiency, it will interfere with any interdiction mission if it remains functional.

Supporting Cast

Missile Site commander (mid-level Strong/Charismatic, change occupation to Military and make him a Heroic GM character using the rules at the end of Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game*), 4 radar operators (low-level Smart/Dedicated ordinary), 4 SAM crewmen (low-level Smart/Dedicated Ordinary), 12 sentries (low-level Strong/Tough ordinary, change occupation to Military). The sentries may be entirely or partially composed of moreaus (some are rats and some are canines, reduce skill totals accordingly).

All the supporting cast have light-duty vests, but only the sentries wear them and then only on duty. The commander, radar operators, and SAM crew all have 9mm MP-443 Grach pistols (use the statistics for the Glock-17, without the accuracy bonus). The sentries have NORINCO QBZ-97 assault rifles (treat as the M16A2, but capable of either single-shot or automatic fire and not burst) with six spare magazines each. They have no night-vision equipment, but they do have six fragmentation grenades in a box locked by the commander.

Things to Consider

As Gamemaster, there are a few decisions you must make to develop this adventure setup for your campaign. The first is what equipment your heroes have. There are a lot of opponents and all have body armor and military-grade weapons, so heroes' equipment can make the difference between a walk in the park and a suicide mission.

The second is where the target SAM launcher (a truck roughly the size of a semi-tractor trailer rig) and associated radar set are located. It could be in a hospital parking lot, a train yard, an outlying ravine, a tank farm, or in a warehouse complex.

What complications do you want to throw in? Does Department-7 abandon the heroes, considering them expendable? Do they have to rescue another unit trapped by unexpected reinforcements?

Finally, will Central Asian conflicts remain a major focus of your campaign or will the focus shift to the Middle East or China?

The Trigger

Read or paraphrase this opening scene to the players to get the action going:

Turkmenistan intends to launch a commando raid against Azerbaijani oilrigs in the Caspian Sea. Intelligence believes that this is part of a larger campaign meant to destabilize Central Asia and the Middle East. The raiders will leave from the port city of Turkmenbashy. We intend to stop them before they launch. You don't need to worry about how we'll do that. No one will be able to trace the accidents, illnesses, and malfunctions back to us. To get the rest of our resources into position, we must get past the air defenses around the city. Insert by foot, get to Turkmenbashy, locate the radar and SAM launcher designated Objective Idaho, disable them, and then move to Landing Zone Arapaho for helicopter retrieval.

What preparations do you want to make before entering Turkmenistan?

Hostages

A terrorist takes a major United States city hostage in this mid-level GeneTech adventure.

Background

An Uncorrupted cell places a number of computerized bombs around the city, all simultaneously transmitting unique

numeric patterns, each bomb receiving each other's pattern. If any bomb stops transmitting, the bombs detonate simultaneously. There are twenty bombs. The cell taking credit for placing them provides instructions on how to find the first bomb to demonstrate the reality of its threat. According to the anonymous caller, some of the bombs are laced with powdered uranium. While this does not make them nuclear bombs, uranium is a tremendously toxic. An explosion could disperse uranium dust across a broad area, lethally poisoning thousands. The numeric patterns use 512-bit encryption. 40-bit encryption would take a single personal computer 8,000 years to crack, so there's no time to predict the pattern and match it with alternate transmissions.

The Uncorrupted's demand is terse: The United States government must begin deporting all moreaus and franks within its borders within 24 hours. 10,000 deportees must leave the United States every day or the Uncorrupted will detonate the bombs. When the deportation is complete, the Uncorrupted will transmit the deactivation code and report the locations of all the bombs.

The first bomb is wired to the phone lines, so authorities assume that all the bombs are wired, and transmit to each other via the Internet. That makes it impossible to track them by their transmissions. If the bombs could be found, no one is completely sure they could disconnect them from the phone lines and reconnect them to some kind of modem fast enough to prevent the bombs from detonating. The authorities are trapped by their fear. If they don't alert city residents, someone, even a child, could find one of the bombs, tinker with it, and set off the explosion. If they do alert city residents, it could start a panic.

SUPPORTING CAST

The primary supporting cast for this adventure is the bombs. They must be located in buildings and wired to phone lines, so it is possible that anyone could stumble across them. Possible additional cast members include an Uncorrupted bomb expert (high-level Smart/Dedicated ordinary, substitute Demolitions for Knowledge (earth and life sciences), and make him a Heroic GM character using the rules at the end of Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes of the *d20 Modern roleplaying game*) and Uncorrupted terrorists (mid-level Tough/Smart ordinary, no changes). The expert shouldn't have more than a Glock 17. Uncorrupted terrorists have MAC Ingram M10 submachine guns and concealable vests.

If you consider a serious plot twist (see Things to Consider, right), moreaus and franks from the Action Arm of the Underground should have light-duty vests and HK MP 5 submachine guns.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

As Gamemaster, there are a few decisions you must make to develop this adventure setup for your campaign. The first in this case is which city is threatened. Pick a city with which you are familiar. Barring that, pick one that's not familiar to your players.

Second, consider the reality of the threat. You may decide that the bomber is a lone nut claiming association with the Uncorrupted, or that a terrorist cell planted the bombs. If you want to go for a real plot twist, make the "terrorists" members of the Action Arm of the Underground. They're setting the Uncorrupted up for a frame as a way to put increased government pressure on the hate crime group. How far would they go to accomplish their goal? How do the heroes discover the truth? You may want to hide the truth from them for a few more adventures. Do the Uncorrupted claim their innocence and offer to help the authorities? Are they sincere, or are they trying to find the Action Arm to get revenge?

Third, decide how many bombs there really are. A lone nut may have planted one bomb and rigged a computer to transmit another signal, fooling authorities into believing that where they found one bomb there must be more. A terrorist cell may really have planted twenty bombs. The Action Arm of the Underground would certainly plant the first bomb to convince the authorities of the threat. If they are major villains of your campaign, they planted all twenty bombs. If they're misunderstood victims, they did not.

Complications may include run-ins with Uncorrupted vigilantes or chance encounters with street gangs. Who has the deactivation code? Where is he or she? Is that person willingly part of the plot? The villain might not be, or have, a bomb expert. Perhaps this one has been kidnapped, or his family taken hostage.

THE TRIGGER

Read or paraphrase this opening scene to the players to get the action going:

This morning the city received a bomb threat. A group claiming to be Uncorrupted say they have twenty bombs planted around the city, some laced with uranium dust. The police got directions to one bomb. According to them, it's wired to the phone lines, transmitting a numeric code. The Uncorrupted say they used a 512-bit encryption for the code, and there's no way we can crack the code in the twenty-four hours before the deadline. If any bomb stops transmitting the code, all the bombs detonate. They demand that the United States start deporting moreaus and franks by the deadline. They want 10,000 deported daily until they're gone. It's impossible, of course.

The Uncorrupted claim that once their demands are met, they will transmit a deactivation code. You must find that code. Hit the streets. Knock heads together. Find these guys. We'll try to buy you time. What do you want to do first?

DELTA GREEN

PX Poker Night

An introductory *Delta Green*/d20 Call of Cthulhu scenario

By Dennis Detwiller and A. Scott Glancy
d20 Conversion by Brian Campbell

secrets man was not meant to know

This scenario is an introduction to the *Delta Green* campaign setting for the d20 System Call of Cthulhu *roleplaying game*. The world of *Delta Green* is the modern world we all know, only everything we know is wrong. Democratic government has been subverted, hidden conspirators control the destiny of nations, alien forces have meddled in human history since the dawn of time, and secret cults adore and worship fathomless evils lurking behind the veil of reality. At the dawn of the new millennium, a small group of conspirators have chosen to make a stand against these forces. These are the men and women of Delta Green. Originally part of the WWII-era Office of Strategic Services, America's first spy agency, Delta Green fought against these evils for nearly three decades. These are not the kind of evil men do, but the evil of absolute mindless destruction: the evil of the Cthulhu Mythos, made even more deadly by the men who would harness these forces to increase their personal power and dominate the world.

In 1969, a disastrous operation in Cambodia caused the Joint Chiefs of Staff to review Delta Green's mission. Embarrassed to discover that taxpayer money was being used to fight supernatural threats (threats that did not "officially" exist), the Pentagon disbanded Delta Green as an expensive and out-of-control agency that had strayed far beyond its original mission. Undaunted, Delta Green continued its crusade, without funding or official sanction, but with guts, determination and great personal sacrifice. Reorganized as a conspiracy based around a compartmentalized cell structure, the men and women of Delta Green work within the federal intelligence and law enforcement community, having to beg, borrow and steal the resources they need to keep the darkness at bay. Through this network of conspirators Delta Green identifies, investigates, and eliminates paranormal threats to the security of the US and the safety of its citizens. The cost is high. Members of Delta Green often lose their careers, their sanity, and even their lives.

Delta Green is always on the lookout to recruit more agents inside government agencies, but the organization also recruits "friendlies," non-federal law enforcement agents, academics, professional criminals, technical experts from myriad fields, and anyone who can be of use in the fight against the secret alien menaces that threaten the world. Most often recruited from the

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ranks of those who have had an encounter with the supernatural or paranormal and lived to talk about it, friendlies often get the most dangerous assignments Delta Green has to offer.

"PX Poker Night" is designed to introduce new characters to the campaign world of *Delta Green* and make them suitable for recruitment by Delta Green as a group of friendlies.

To get started, have your players create new characters who are serving in the Air Force, or have them select from the eleven pre-generated characters provided at the end of this scenario (unused characters become NPCs). Players may choose any of the base personnel other than Major Sprague, the base commander. Note that the character backgrounds are meant to reflect the characters' training and skills, not their present duties. If you plan to use this scenario to kick off a campaign, it might be better to have the players roll up their own characters rather than use pre-generated ones, many of whom are better suited for a single night's entertainment rather than a career as an agent of Delta Green.

The characters, whether rolled up or pre-generated, are meant to be Air Force misfits. They have a long string of misconduct charges and have perhaps done short stretches of time in the stockade. Owing to their persistent talents at screwing up, the characters have been stationed at Platte Air Force Base, hoping to quietly serve out the last months of their enlistment.

The Base

Platte AFB is the last stop on the road to dishonorable discharge. One step up from a military prison, the Spartan base consists of a dozen buildings and two airstrips in the middle of a Nebraska wasteland some 20 miles from Marion, the nearest town. Since the base staff consists of only twelve airmen, many of the buildings never see significant use. Once or twice a month, the Air Force flies decommissioned surplus aircraft to the base, providing rare moments of interest and activity. Helicopters, trainers, and even some jets find their way here before being sold to foreign governments or sold as scrap. The base personnel park the aircraft in the "graveyard" north of the base, mothballing them to remove fuel and lubricants, sealing up the planes' mechanical accesses to protect the vehicles from the elements.

With little to do, the personnel mostly just kill time, waiting for their terms of enlistment to end. Saturday evenings at 8 P.M., however, rain or shine, it's PX poker night. Not that it's actually held at the PX, or post exchange, anymore. These days, the game is held in the bare-bone remnants of the NCO club. Even Major Sprague plays, while those who are in the doghouse with Sprague (usually half of the staff at any given time) pull duty (the guard shack and the air traffic control tower). PX poker night is one of the only high points in the week for the base personnel (the other being *Baywatch*

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reruns), anticipated due to the simple fact you can win your superiors' money.

This Saturday's PX poker night is about to take a turn for the bizarre . . . and deadly.

Getting Around Platte Air Force Base

This key and the maps on the following page give the Gamemaster a general description of the base and its environs with an eye toward answering questions characters may ask in the midst of running for their lives and looking for a way to defend themselves. Plenty of improvised weapons can be found about the base, and the Gamemaster should encourage the characters to arm themselves with whatever's available. It would be bad form if somebody didn't end up swinging a garden rake at the monster. See the Weapons Quick Reference sidebar on page 62 for game rules related to "found" weapons. Remember that attack rolls with improvised weapons suffer a -4 penalty to reflect the attacker's lack of proficiency.

It's important for the Gamemaster to remember that just because an item is not listed in an area description does not mean it isn't there. Quick-thinking characters should be rewarded if they come up with a reasonable suggestion. The characters aren't going to find a flamethrower, but they may be able to "MacGyver" together something within reason.

All the occupied buildings are equipped with fire alarms and sprinkler systems. The hangars, guard shack, motorpool, and NCO club only have fire extinguishers.

Except where noted, all the buildings have wooden doors capable of locking (Open Lock DC 10), are of cinderblock construction, and have plenty of glass windows.

Strange Happenings

For the past twenty-five years, strange lights—dissolving, reappearing, and moving at incredible speeds—have been sighted in Platte County. At first they were nothing but an oddity, but then the mutilations began. They started in 1981, and since then more than 100 cows and bulls have been found dissected, with no more than a dozen cows taken per year. Many farmers in the surrounding areas have switched from livestock to crops in order to avoid the issue completely. The lights are known in the area as the "ghost lights," and they have never been successfully photographed nor has any physical evidence of their activity (beyond animal corpses) been found. Sightings have become more and more frequent over the years, and by 1998, a sighting a night was not unusual. Even personnel at Platte AFB have seen them.

The Real Story

The strange happenings in Platte County are due to the presence of a small colony of creatures known as mi-go, or the Fungi from Yuggoth. Early in 1975, these alien creatures set up a small base in an abandoned mine in the northern part of the county so they could extract certain extradimensional materials they desired from the Earth. The "ghost lights" are actually mi-go flying about the countryside on one inexplicable errand or another, and communicating with each other using the bioluminescent organs in their heads. In 1981, as part of their ongoing experiments in terrestrial genetics and psychology, the mi-go began stealing genetic material from area livestock and secretly kidnapping unsuspecting humans. They found that Platte County's isolation and lack of sophistication were useful in conducting their experiments while drawing scant attention. When it comes to having contact with humans, or performing tasks that might expose them to humans, the mi-go use biological "puppets" rather than expose themselves to scrutiny. The mi-go have also found that humans react less

Platte Air Force Base

1. Guard Shack
Little more than four concrete walls, a door, and a phone for making on-base calls, the base's guard shack is manned by one guard during the day and by two at night. Major Sprague doles out guard shack duty as punishment to subordinates who misbehave or whom he simply doesn't like, so guards here tend to be careless and resentful. On the evening of PX poker night, each airman positioned here bears an M-16A2 assault rifle with a basic load of 10 magazines and a Baretta M92 pistol with 3 magazines.

2. Administration Offices
This building houses Major Sprague's office as well as the desks of Lt. Shea, Sgt. Bach, and Airman Dunsany. Desks and rusty filing cabinets crowd the office "bullpen." All desks feature phones, but only the switchboard on Dunsany's desk allows for outgoing calls. Possible improvised weapons include letter openers and chair legs that can be broken and fashioned into crude clubs. A small supply room off the bullpen includes common military surplus store items like binoculars, parkas, walkie-talkies, flashlights, and first-aid kits. The building has a working sprinkler system and two fire axes set onto opposite walls.

A safe-like door leads from Major Sprague's office to the base's weapons locker. Platte Air Force Base has relatively few weapons for the simple reason that they are not needed (except for shooting the occasional rattlesnake). No personal weapons are allowed in the barracks. All weapons must be kept here.

Getting into the windowless weapons locker requires keys for the main door (Open Lock DC 25) as well as for a chain-link cage inside (DC 15). Further, the main door features a combination lock (DC 40) that requires a secret combination known only by Major Sprague (also the sole holder of the keys mentioned above). The major will not tell the characters the combination for any reason and likely will not survive the scenario, so it's extremely unlikely that the characters will get their hands on the weapons inside the locker. More to the point, the dramatic tension of the scenario will be greatly reduced if the players are allowed access to powerful military-grade weapons. Nevertheless, should the characters find some way inside the locker, they find the following:

- 6 M-16A2 assault rifles with 60 magazines and 4000 5.56mm rounds.
- 6 Beretta M92 automatic pistols with 18 magazines and 1000 9mm rounds.

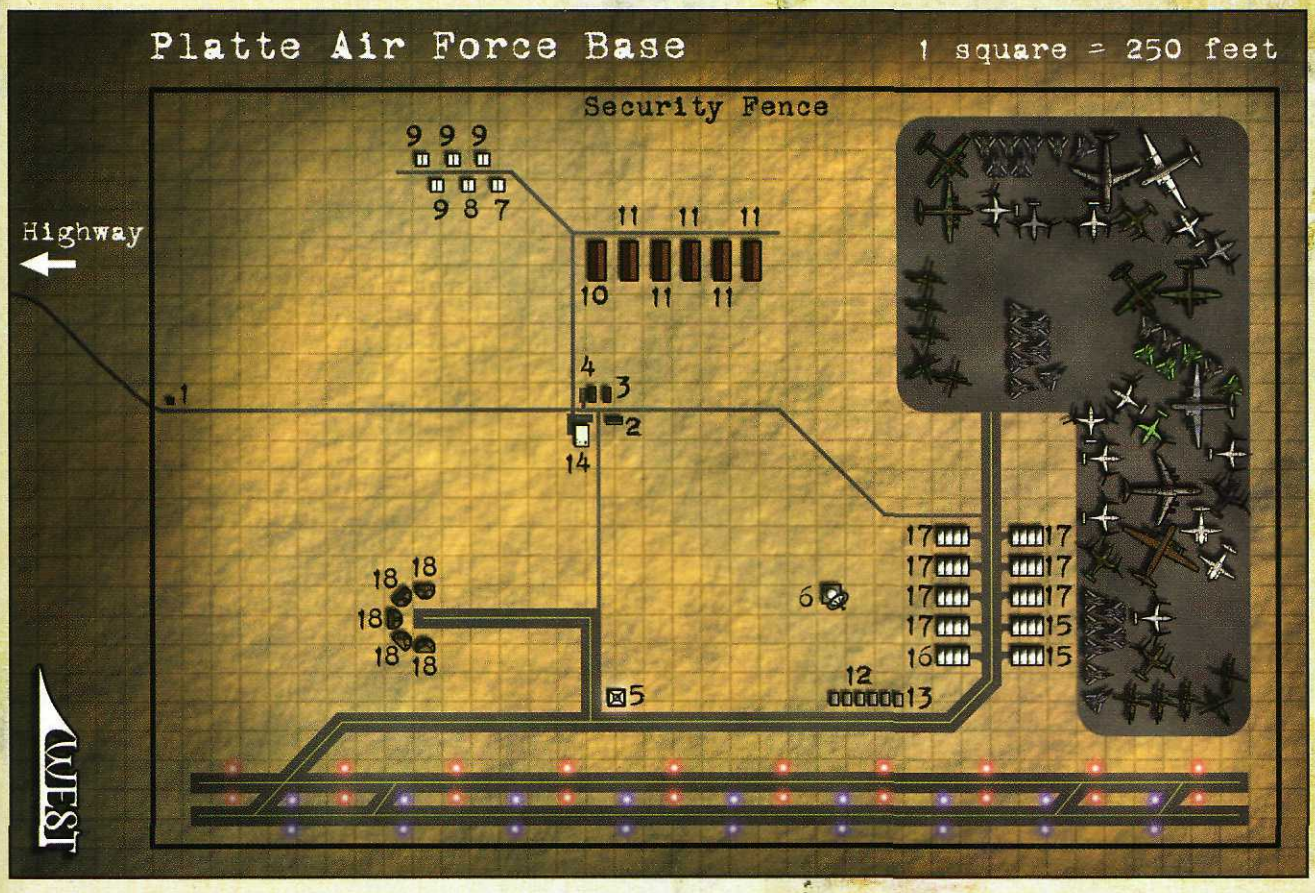
3. NCO Club
The "club" is little more than a disused building refurbished and outfitted with a few tables and folding chairs, a TV that gets lousy reception, dartboards, a foosball table missing one goalie, a warped pool table, and a sweaty beer fridge. Possible improvised weapons include pool sticks, beer and liquor bottles, full beer cans, and portable fire extinguishers.

4. Mess Hall
The mess hall is really more of a communal kitchen and dining room. Everyone cooks their own meals at Platte AFB. Possible improvised weapons include carving knives, cleavers, frying pans, and appropriately hot cooking oil.

5. Control Tower
The small, three-story control tower is always manned, despite the lack of traffic at Platte AFB. The radio array on the roof can send communications as far as Offut AFB in Omaha, Nebraska. The control tower is hooked into the radar tower through underground cables. While there are no improvised weapons here, binoculars and signal flares are available, color-coded to warn approaching planes of any hazards. The walls of the tower are made of poured concrete, and there are no windows in the tower save for the very top, where floor-to-ceiling windows surround the air traffic control station. Position two or three NPCs in the control tower on PX poker night.

6. Radar Tower
This tower contains the base's radar array and back-up generator, which can provide power to the base for just a few hours before running out of fuel.

7. Major Sprague's Bungalow
The base commander's quarters is a single-occupancy one-story house made of whitewashed wood. Improvised



weapons include the kind of basic goods found in a common domestic setting.

8. Lt. O'Shea's Quarters
Identical to Major Sprague's quarters insofar as the same kind of improvised weapons are available.

9. Officer's Quarters
The base contains four other officer's billets, identical to Major Sprague's bungalow. Only one is occupied by the base's executive officer. Unoccupied quarters are padlocked and empty.

10. Enlisted Dormitories
Looking a bit like a Motel 6, the enlisted dormitory is two stories tall and has rooms for thirty-two personnel. Only ten rooms are currently occupied. The only improvised weapons are the fire axes available at the ends of the hallways in the cabinets with the fire hoses.

11. Unoccupied Dormitories
These six buildings are unoccupied and padlocked shut (Open Lock DC 15). Each of the nearly empty buildings contains a half-dozen fire axes.

12. Disused Quonset Huts
These empty structures are nothing more than empty metal shells over a poured concrete floor.

13. Storage Hut
This old Quonset hut is filled with landscaping tools like axes, saws, pruning sheers, shovels, machetes, gas-powered edgers, and even a gas-powered chain saw. The hut also contains a gas-powered riding lawnmower used to keep the weeds around the runways trimmed.

14. Post Exchange
The base's post exchange resembles a large convenience store, offering frozen dinners, canned and dry goods, and all manner of unhealthy snack foods. Because the base has been trimmed back to a skeleton staff, many of the shelves stand empty. The PX is closed after hours, its wares protected by a rather shoddy (DC 12) padlock.

15. Motorpool
Several Hangars have been turned into parking garages for the base's vehicles. The following vehicles are available at the base motorpool:

- 2 Chevy Blazers, 4x4 utility trucks.
- 2 small tractors for towing aircraft.
- 1 snowplow mounted on a 2 1/2-ton 3-axle truck.
- 2 fuel tankers (5-ton 3-axle trucks).
- 2 fire trucks equipped for fighting aviation fuel fires.

16. Aircraft Maintenance Hangar
This rusty hanger contains the tools the base personnel use to maintain the base vehicles and to mothball decommissioned aircraft.

Improvised weapons to be found here include heavy wrenches, hammers, tire irons, crowbars, an oxy-acetylene welder, and gasoline (combined with bottles from NCO club, these would make excellent Molotov cocktails). The gasoline is kept in 55-gallon drums.

17. Empty Aircraft Hangars
Exactly as advertised. There is nothing in these cavernous metal buildings except dust, dirt, and oil stains.

18. Fuel Bunkers
Highly combustible fuel siphoned from decommissioned aircraft is stored in these underground tanks, which have been specially positioned to deflect any accidental explosion away from the base. Lighting the tanks results in a catastrophic explosion. Any characters within a 50-ft. blast radius suffer 20d6 points of damage. Characters can make a Reflex save to take only half damage (for whatever that's worth). Anyone within the radius but between the bunkers and base receives a +4 circumstance bonus to this save.

The Aircraft Graveyard
A metal labyrinth of abandoned helicopters, trainers, and cargo planes north of the base provides plenty of places to hide, but little in the way of improvised weapons beyond clubs fashioned from old metal. All aircraft weapons have been removed long before the craft arrived at Platte AFB. Anyone attempting to hide among the mothballed aircraft receives a +2 circumstance bonus to Hide checks.

violently to these puppets, with their large intelligent eyes, humanoid form, and childlike stature. These puppets are the source of the stories among "abductees" and "contactees" of the race of aliens known as the "greys."

SONNET Arrives

Early in the afternoon before PX poker night, a large dark van bearing USAF markings, about the size of a UPS delivery truck, pulls up to the main gate of Platte AFB. The driver, a plain-looking man in a suit, flashes an Air Force I.D. and a bundle of orders and coded sheets. These are quickly processed and the van is let in the front gate; it parks near the administration building. Two men in USAF uniforms wearing heavy body armor and carrying M-16s with M203 grenade launchers step from the van and stand on each side, taking up guard positions. The man in the suit confers with Major Sprague in private and then returns to the van. The guards

mount up and the van drives out to an isolated area of the airfield near the mothballed aircraft. Once the van is parked, the guards emerge again and the lights come on in the van. And so it sits, unmoving.

Over the PA, Major Sprague announces: "The van parked in the 'graveyard' is to be avoided by base personnel. Do not interfere with the visiting staff's classified operations. All personnel are confined to base until the visiting staff has left. That is all."

If asked about the van at the poker game, Major Sprague responds only that "It's authorized, classified, and none of our business." If asked how long they are going to be stuck on base, he says "I was assured it will only be a day at most." If pressed further, Major Sprague insists with all seriousness that the character drop the subject.

Anyone looking carefully (perhaps through binoculars) will notice a large amount of grounding strips on the bottom of the van, and that the guards are wearing exceptionally bulky helmets, like motorcycle helmets, which are covered in a dull reflective surface (either fact can be noticed with a successful DC 15 Spot check). Anyone within 100 yards who makes a successful Listen check (DC 15) hears a low hum coming from the direction of the van.

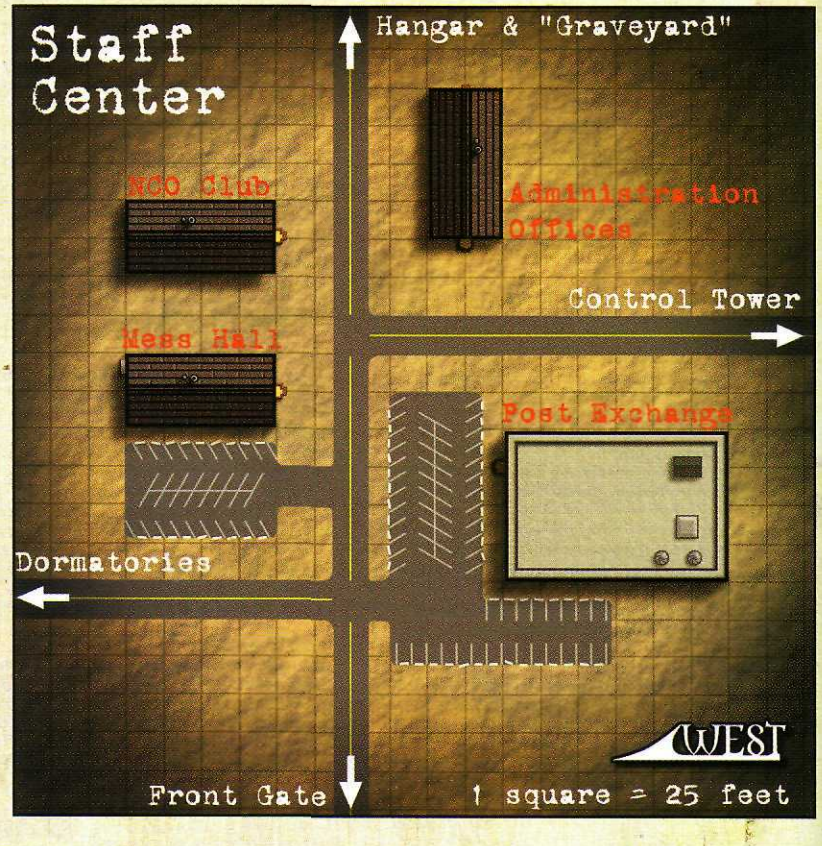
What's Really Happening

The men in the van are not USAF personnel. They are members of an intelligence organization that has slipped so deep behind walls of secrecy and compartmentalization that they exist above and beyond the normal chain of command. They are Majestic-12, a cabal of military, industrial, and intelligence community conspirators who've cut a deal with the race of aliens known to them as the "greys." Bartering US sovereignty for alien technology, the conspirators of Majectic-12 increase their hold on power while protecting their alien partners' mysterious agenda. Majestic-12 is one of the most powerful and deadly enemies that Delta Green has ever faced. Majestic-12 thinks they are in control of the situation, but in truth they have been manipulated into becoming the mi-gos' servants. However, since the mi-go keep their true appearance and intentions secret from Majestic-12, they sometimes run afoul of their unwitting servants. PX poker night is going to be one of those times.

One of Majestic-12's pawns is a top secret Department of Defense project called MOONDUST. Its "official" mission is recovering foreign aerospace technology, everything from crashed aircraft to spy satellites. In reality, MOONDUST dispatches USAF investigation and crash recovery teams, code named BLUE FLY teams, to hunt down and recover alien technology for MOONDUST's true masters, Majestic-12. The newly arrived van is part of one such BLUE FLY team.

In the van is a device code-named SONNET, which incorporates a crystal of extra-terrestrial origin. Another BLUE FLY team recovered the crystal in 1995 after an outbreak of madness and violence befell the isolated West Virginia community of Kanter's Creek. MOONDUST already had an interest in the area due to a high number of visual sightings of brightly glowing aerial phenomena, as well as some unexplained radar contacts, but the main factor that brought in MOONDUST to Kanter's Creek was the EM interference that blanketed the town. The interference disrupted all communications and electronics in a five-mile radius. Even county emergency could get no closer than two miles before their engines quit.

Deciding to err on the side of caution, the BLUE FLY team used their NBC (Nuclear/Biological/Chemical) gear when they walked into town. All thirty of the village's inhabitants had either gone mad or died; killed by their neighbors, trying to fly from the roof, or performing other acts of delusional lunacy. Town animals had fared little better. The brick-sized glowing crystal they found in the general store seemed to suggest itself as the source of the problem. With no sane or coherent survivors, how the crystal arrived remains a mystery. *Suspecting that their shielded helmets were blocking* some sort of electromagnetic signal that was able to affect both human bioelectric energy and electrical systems, the crystal was packed off in a lead-lined container. The deaths



NCO Club
Storage
Toilet
Common Area
Toilet
Mess Hall
Storage Area
Storage Room
Toilet
Cold
Kitchen
Dining Hall
Office
Administration Offices
Weapons Locker
Supply Room
Closet
Major's Office
Toilet
XO's Office
Empty Office
Bull Pen
1 square = 5 feet
WEST

and madness were covered up as an outbreak of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease.

The crystal was relayed to Project PLUTO, the Majestic-12 group responsible for studying advanced technology related to the alien presence on Earth. Despite being unable to identify the elements that composed the crystal, Project PLUTO R&D set to work harnessing its power since it held great potential as a weapon. Eventually, PLUTO combined the crystal with a Cold War-era EM pulse weapon that had never quite produced results, employing the crystal as the device's EM wave generator. They called this new weapon SONNET. PLUTO put SONNET on the developmental fast track and after a series of successful tests on lab monkeys and hardened electronics, they decided to field test SONNET against its intended target: the greys.

Majestic-12 doesn't wholly trust their alien "allies" and wants to be able to evict their "guests" if they ever overstay their welcome. Based on observations of grey technology, many Project PLUTO scientists believe that the greys may be vulnerable to EM weapons. The trouble is that it is hard to test out a new weapon on your "allies." So Majestic-12 has decided to engineer a fake "friendly fire" incident to test the weapon, making it look as if the attack was not deliberate.

Looking through their files, Majestic found that Platte AFB and the area surrounding it had long been the locus of many UFO-related incidents, including "false" and unidentified radar contacts, cattle mutilations, and the mysterious local phenomena of the "ghost lights." Best of all, it was an area of activity that the greys had not told them to keep clear of, thus giving Majestic-12 plausible deniability regarding any accidental shoot down. They even had a USAF facility to operate from, staffed by personnel who, due to their precarious military careers, could be encouraged to keep their mouths shut.

The Best Laid Plans . . .

The SONNET device is in the black van. It is operated by two scientists from PLUTO who regulate the emanations of the crystal within. The other Majestic-12 personnel at Platte AFB are a plainclothes security officer and his two armored goons. The van and the staff who came with it are shielded from the strange effects of the device by special gear, particularly by those bulky helmets. Obviously this leaves everyone else on the base vulnerable. The scientists' job is to keep the device functioning within the right parameters (a tricky proposition). Their equipment is really there to focus the emanations and keep them under control.

If the SONNET device brings down an alien craft, the PLUTO team will turn the device off by throwing a lever that drops the crystal into a lead-lined safe; like dropping the control rods into a nuclear fuel pile. Then a task force of Black Hawk and Apache helicopters (eight each) will be called via radio and will arrive from a staging area 100 miles away in just over half an hour. (Why so far away? Hey, they are trying to sneak up on aliens, here. Better safe than sorry.) The helicopter-borne commandos will secure the crash-site and an AH-130 "Spectre" gunship will take up an overwatch position above the base. Within an hour, a pair of giant C-5 Galaxy transport planes will land with a

The Effects of the SONNET Electro Magnetic Device

The EM device has not been perfected, and although it can be deadly, it has some faults. It blankets an approximately two-mile radius. The basic effects of the device are as follows:

When initially activated, the EM waves cause everyone within a two-mile radius to make a Sanity check every half hour or lose a Sanity point. This level of exposure begins around 3 P.M. and continues until 9 P.M.

At 9 P.M. the device will be turned up to full power. This will require a Sanity check every minute to prevent a loss of 1d6 Sanity points. It's at this point, right in the middle of the poker game, that the lights go out and things start to get *really* weird.

If a Sanity check is failed, even if only one point is lost, the affected character must make a DC 10 Intelligence check. If it is failed, a visual hallucination occurs. These hallucinations are very transparent and are obviously illusory; bubbles float in the air, walls ripple, floors undulate, objects moving leave trails of scintillating lights. These illusions are extremely distracting. During the hallucinations, apply -6 to all skill checks. They last for a number of seconds equal to the distance the character's Sanity is from 100, minus their INT stat. So a character with a 64 SAN and a 12 INT would suffer a hallucination for (64+12=76, 100-76=24) twenty-four seconds. Again, the Gamemaster may wish to make Int checks for the players, so that the hallucinations simply occur without an obvious causal relationship between die roll and effect.

Any character inside a metal-walled building (like a Quonset hut) or blocked by a large metal object (such as standing behind a fuel tank or vehicle) receives a +20% bonus to his Sanity checks to resist the effects of the device. Any character outside who is wearing any type of metal over his head—such as an old steel infantry helmet or even a stewpot—also receives a +20% bonus. These bonuses are cumulative.

After the SONNET team has been killed (see below), the device pulses at a lower frequency, requiring a Sanity check every five minutes with a loss of 1d3 for every failed roll. Unregulated, these pulses prevent any electrical devices from functioning within a two-mile radius of the SONNET crystal.

team to recover any wreckage. The base personnel will be read the riot act and warned to forget everything they saw, or think they saw. The wreckage will be loaded aboard the transport planes and flown to Majestic-cleared laboratories.

Of course, no plan, no matter how brilliant, ever survives contact with the enemy.

The big problem is that the crystal is not merely a source of EM waves. *It is a fragment of a mi-go "gate-ship" that broke* loose after it was struck by lightning over the Appalachians. A gate-ship is a mobile terminus for a gate so that the mi-go can travel vast distances without having to risk the hazards of the actual voyage. A gate-ship makes the journey instead and then serves as a conduit between the launch point and wherever the gate-ship has landed.

What Project PLUTO never realized is that the strange EM pulses given off by the crystal are byproducts of the gate-ship's propulsion system. The flawed emanations from SONNET's damaged crystal will react with any mi-go gate-ship in the immediate vicinity and cause its propulsion system to fail and crash. While this would seem to be exactly the desired result, there are going to be unexpected and lethal side effects. The reaction between the ship and the crystal will also cause a discharge of alien energy that will kill everyone whose is wearing the insulation technology designed to keep the EM wave from cooking their brains. So you cannot run the device without protection, but once the weapon takes out a ship the protection that lets the crew operate the device also kills them. Once the SONNET crew is dead, the crystal will continue emanating its unregulated wave, which dampens all electrical power sources in a five-mile radius.

And one other minor detail; the explosive reaction between the gate-ship and the crystal will "gate" something unwelcome onto the base; a savage, hungry creature called a dimensional shambler.

Oops.

SONNET in Action

Over the course of several hours, the SONNET device affects the personnel at the base. (See the sidebar on p. 50 for details on what the device does in game terms.) It's up to you to play this out. The simplest way to handle this passage of time is probably to just describe how tensions all over the base seem to be high, with a couple of fights breaking out. *Those involved, of course, will be assigned guard duty during* the poker game. Potentially, the Gamemaster can involve a character in one of these altercations. It's important to remember that as the device erodes the base personnel's Sanity, those receiving the worst effects will be those outside, i.e. those on guard duty . . . the only people with immediate access to firearms!

The Gamemasters can apply the effects of the device to the characters whenever he or she prefers. The Gamemaster should ask the characters what they're doing for the afternoon (they have no prescribed duties today), and react accordingly. The Gamemaster needn't sweat every die roll resulting from the device's operation during this period, but may assume that the characters lose about 1d8 Sanity points over the course of the afternoon. NPCs will lose 1d12 Sanity points. (This doesn't happen all at once, so temporary insanity isn't going to occur.) Give a couple of characters brief, confusing hallucinations in which mundane items take on surreal aspects for a few moments.

As the poker game begins—which should be the effective start of minute-to-minute play—stage a hallucination or violent schizophrenia event with an NPC who barges into the game from guard duty and flips out. As the characters are dealing with this tense situation, there are a number of ways the situation can spiral out of control. The characters can control the action in this section if they take the initiative. Otherwise the Gamemaster directs the action.

Things Fall Apart

Most characters will be bright enough to realize that what's happening has some connection to the strange van out by the aircraft graveyard. When NPCs begin to go mad, and the characters begin feeling the effects of the EM weapon, the characters may want to take action against the men in the van or attempt to escape.

Escape will prove difficult but not impossible. Major Sprague will attempt to prevent anyone from leaving, and could grow violent if his Sanity points are low. Anyone on-guard at the gate will also have very shaky Sanity by this point and may fire on anyone making a break for it. Vehicles from the base motorpool will function until the SONNET team is dead and the emanations become uncontrolled. So unless the fleeing characters get two miles away before that happens, their vehicle will die and they will be stranded. Characters trying to walk out eventually will be picked up by helicopter-borne BLUE FLY commandos (if they don't go mad from the SONNET emanations first).

The men guarding SONNET will be watching how the base personnel react and will be ready for trouble. The armed security guards shoot anyone who approaches closer than forty yards, although they issue a verbal warning first. If the resistance against the "visiting staff" turns into a full-blown armed "uprising," the SONNET crew turns the weapon up to full power, if it isn't already, and calls for help from the security team at the staging area 100 miles distant. It takes the helicopters half an hour to show up. By then the mi-go ship will arrive and crash (see below). In the meantime the Majestic security men work as a team and will not allow themselves to be split up or separated. They will not prevent men from fleeing, but will return fire on any who shoot at them.

If the characters sit tight, the NPCs on guard duty will be the first to wig out. Unfortunately they are close to the characters and the other base personnel at PX poker night. If they become violent and attack other base personnel (primarily focused on Major Sprague as the source of their misery) the Majestic-12 Security men will callously not interfere so long as it's just the base personnel being attacked. They shoot any insane base personnel who look like they are going to fire on the SONNET device.

At the moment things seem most desperate for the characters, a horrible whine and an electrical sizzle are heard from near the van. Above the van, outlined in an arcing blue-white aura, is a large crystalline craft. Pulses of energy shoot between it and the van. Anyone wearing one of the protective helmets (i.e. the Majestic security men and technicians) is struck by bolts of energy and instantly killed. A stray bolt hits a transformer and all the lights on the base go out. The crystal craft suddenly plummets, sporadically glowing, falling among the mothballed aircraft on the north end of the base. It audibly impacts the aircraft, causing great damage to the aircraft. The crystal's light pulses brightly once, then fades to a dull glow. Anyone viewing this sight must make a successful Sanity check or lose 1 point of Sanity.

A DC 15 Spot check reveals that the strange light from within the van still shines, lit by the fragment of crystal inside the EM weapon.

The Characters' Predicament

After the chaos leading up to the crash, the characters may be saddled with several wounded or insane base personnel. The characters will need help to deal with the casualties, but as long as the crystal is pulsing at full power all electrical devices on the base will not function. That includes the phone lines, the base radio, cell-phones, digital watches, and even the batteries in the base vehicles. Yes, that includes flashlights, too. Furthermore, none of the BLUE FLY helicopters or aircraft will be able to get within two miles of the base without suffering system failures and crashing. Of course, as long as the crystal is pulsing, the base personnel will continue to loose Sanity points, too. There may still be violently insane base personnel stalking the base, and as time goes by, more and more personnel will join the ranks of the insane. Shutting off SONNET will be a priority.

The Van

The van is locked and its windows are bulletproof glass, so the doors will have to be forced. A crowbar would do nicely. Each DC 15 Strength check to pry open the door takes a minute to complete. Inside the Project SONNET van are the two corpses of the scientists; their eyes have exploded and they appear to have suffered from massive internal bleeding (0/1 Sanity points). They wear the same bulky helmets as the guards outside the van, who also have the same symptoms. A large electronic device fills the back half of the van. Visible through a small glass window in a safe-like door of the SONNET device is a glowing piece of crystal. Characters who've seen the crashed ship will recognize the similarity of the glow both emit. The EM weapon is currently on. A chemically powered counter slowly ticks digital time. It gets faster and faster, cresting for a while, and then gets slower and slower. It operates on a five minute cycle, and the device pulses once at the crest of each cycle. The device can easily be shut down using a well-marked mechanical lever marked "emergency shutdown." It drops the crystal into a lead-lined safe.

Once the SONNET device is off, the characters may use the base's radio to call for help, or get in a vehicle and leave the base. Calling for help will bring the nearby BLUE FLY team running to secure the base (see below).

On the top of a stack of papers is a sheet stamped: TOP SECRET/ORCON/SONNET. The documents describe, in technical terms, the EM pulse device. A summary paragraph begins the document (see opposite.)

If the characters blast the van with weapons fire or burn it with Molotov cocktails they will still manage to turn off the

Device #5491
Project SONNET test model,
High-Yield EM Screen
Approved for field test against UAC
8/24/02.
Reclamation operations are to follow any successful test.
Platte AFB, Platte County Nebraska,
twelve personnel. See attached dossiers.
All non-MOONDUST personnel deemed expendable.
Any casualties are to be retained for autopsy and tissue sampling.
68554271/68564372/78674383

device. Once the Sonnet device's self-monitoring systems detect any malfunctions, an automatic shut-down protocol drops the crystal into its lead-lined coffin. If they manage to blow the van to pieces, with dynamite or serious munitions they fortunately don't have access to, they could destroy the lead container, thus leaving them with no way to block the crystal's emanations. With any luck, your characters will not be so ingenious.

The Mi-Go's Predicament

The Platte-area mi-go were unaware of the device in the van or the clandestine operation underway. Once they detected the emanations of the crystal, they decided to perform a quiet fly-by of the base, in case it was one of their ships in trouble. Once they fell within the range of the EM fields the mi-go gate-ship malfunctioned. A horrible explosion occurred on board the gate-ship and a feedback of energy caused the two scientists in the van and the three guards to be electrocuted. The gate was destroyed, cutting the mi-go off from its brethren back at the mine. The lone mi-go on board the craft brought it down as well as it could, impacting roughly among the mothballed aircraft. The mi-go was pinned within the ship during the crash and is unable to free itself. The mi-go had six grey automatons on board, but only two survived the crash. They are far too weak to free the trapped alien. The mi-go is badly hurt and cannot contact the other mi-go in the area due to the condition of the ship, so it sends the greys to the nearby humans.

The mi-go's goal is to get a couple of humans to follow the greys back to the mi-go and free it so it can escape. It sees its predicament as an opportunity to learn: can it manipulate the humans' emotions enough to overcome their natural fear of the unknown?

First Contact

The crystalline ship lies among the wreckage of the aircraft on the north side of the base, about a half-mile from the barracks and NCO club. It is clearly visible from the NCO club and is still within range of the EM device. About ten minutes after the crash, two beings can be seen walking away from the crash site, followed by a glowing light. Carefully, the two of them make their way toward the nearest base personnel. These are the greys, moving under the direction of the trapped mi-go, and viewing them costs 0/1 Sanity points. A glowing ball follows them, hovering about waist level, making no movements except to follow the grey's movement. The greys are unarmed and approach the camp in an exaggerated gesture of surrender: arms up, far away from each other. All are naked. The apparent leader is holding a piece of crystal atop its head, balancing it carefully and replacing it when it falls to the ground. The leader says in a deep voice, with no nasal quality to it at all:

"Us require assistance, our dog are injured, and must be freed before it ceases. Us are weak, and the door are beyond our capacities. Us require assistance."

Just hearing this comment requires a Sanity check (0/1).

Speaking with the greys is a difficult proposition, but several things will be obvious about them:

- They do not understand plurals very well.
- *What one hears, sees or learns, all the others know as well.*
- They have little understanding of human culture; the apparent leader's wearing of the crystal atop its head is a ham-fisted attempt to approximate the human custom of insignia used to demonstrate rank.

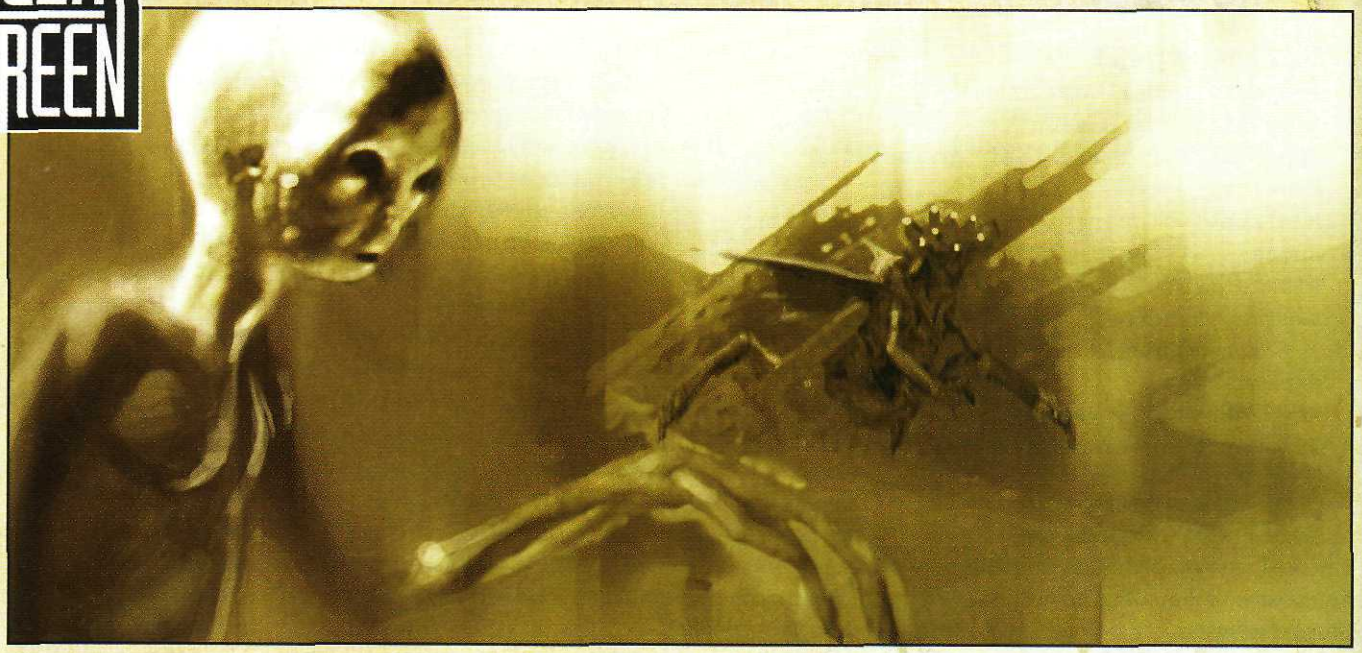
What can be understood through the conversation, limited as it is, is that a "dog" (that is, a pet or something) is trapped in the nearby ship and that their fragile bodies are unable to move the wreckage enough to free it. They have come searching for help. The greys will answer simple questions very literally. If asked who they are, they assert: "We are."

Where do they came from? "A far place."
Why are they here? "To understand."
What is the glowing ball of light? "A mind."
What do they want with humans? "Mutual benefit."
Why do they mutilate cattle? "To understand."
Do they take people? "Yes."
Why? "To understand."

And so on.

If the characters are more demanding of an explanation before they help, the leader explains the following. It is in fact a prepared statement, one the mi-go have been using since their first involvement with the U.S. government (or rather Majestic-12). It is a total fabrication.

The greys say they are a race similar to ours from a planet in the M-31 star cluster. They travel through space because a



catastrophe destroyed their home world and their parent species. They desperately need genetic material to propagate, because they were bred as a sterile, cloned species intended only for space travel and exploration. They want only peace and free trade with all species. They will put humans in contact with other races in the galaxy . . .

"When you are ready."

The greys will wait peacefully at the gate for one or more humans to accompany them back to their ship. If it appears that no one will come, the second grey grabs his side and collapses. The other will mill sadly about it, and point towards the ship and repeat: "He will cease." If the characters go with the greys to the ship, the ill one will seem to revive. It's a terribly obvious ploy, but its poor execution may give the characters some hope that the greys are harmless.

The Ship

The ship is a 30' × 30' eight-sided crystal, shaped much like an eight-sided die. Although it was heard to impact roughly, its surface appears unmarked. The runway is pitted from the impact. The craft glows dimly and surrounding its hull are what seems to be debris from the inside of the ship, including three inanimate grey bodies which are badly burned.

The Entrance: The entrance appears as if by magic. It begins as an apparently solid surface which opens up, beginning with a pinpoint hole and silently widening to a diameter of six feet. The opening reveals a strange packed-dirt-like interior, like an underground tunnel. The tunnel interior seems much larger than the exterior of the craft would allow. A successful DC 15 Spot check reveals this fact, those who notice take a 0/1 Sanity loss. The tunnel is littered with debris and strange objects. The door stays open behind the characters as they enter.

The Intersection: Branch tunnels lead in three different directions; straight ahead, a smashed grey body can be found whose arms are broken at both the forearms and shoulders. This tunnel leads to the gate room where the "dog" is trapped.

The Gate Room: This is the room in the gate-ship that contained a transdimensional gate back to the nearby underground mi-go base. The room is spherical and all the surfaces seem to be made of clay. A very large chunk, what used to be the gate, has peeled off in a thick strip and pinned a small, hideous creature to the ground. The creature is approximately six feet long, not much bigger than a human being and is built somewhat like a crab, composed of sponge-like material covered in irregularly spaced bits of chitinous exo-skeleton. The part that appears to be the head changes colors as the characters watch, from red to blue and back again. It has no offensive-looking teeth or claws. If the players begin to move the rubble, the mi-go produces an exceptionally emulated whimper—it sounds almost eerily like the recorded sound of a dog. In its non-threatening condition, the mi-go only costs the characters 1/1d3 Sanity points. Lifting the pile from the "dog" requires a difficult (DC 22) Strength check that most likely will require the characters and the greys to work together. Once the mi-go is freed, the lights in the craft go out and the greys attempt to grab the characters with astonishing speed while the creature zips out the tunnel. Once the mi-go is gone, the greys collapse, inert and lifeless. The ball of light shoots out of the ship first in an attempt to distract anyone attempting to stop the mi-go's escape, then it flies away and disappears.

Characters or NPCs waiting outside see the glow of the gate-ship wink off. A dark shape, the mi-go, scurries out of the ship and into the maze of twisted aircraft wreckage after the glowing sphere shoots out first. Anyone viewing this must make a Spot check against the mi-go's Hide check (+10, +2 cir-

cumstance bonus). Those who succeed suffer a potential loss of 0/1d6 Sanity. NPCs are uninterested in following the "horrible thing" into the dark maze of wreckage and dusty aircraft hulls. Once within the refuge of the aircraft graveyard, the mi-go unfolds its wings and flies away into the dark night.

The Abduction Room: This room is to the right of the intersection, down a small corridor. It is the typical abduction room from UFO folklore, including bizarre medical tools and a human-scale examination chair with restraints. Its strange clay walls glow with a luminous white fungus that clings to every surface.

The Storage Room: The last room is cream-colored with six drawers set in the wall. Piled on the floor of this room are human artifacts, personal items like watches, wallets, glasses and such, some dating back almost fifty years. A random example would be an old watch with an engraving on the back that reads "For Jenny, 10-5-55"; the watch is still running. Each of the drawers contains a hollow shaped like a grey laying on its back with its arms at its sides. The interior is made of a plastic-like material that smells bad and is wet to the touch.

Oh, We Almost Forgot . . .

. . . the dimensional shambler. Brought to Platte AFB by this dimensional accident, this fearsome critter makes the characters' situation ever more problematic. It stalks silently through the base, picking off the personnel one by one, starting with isolated, wounded, and insane airmen who have been left on their own. It also will interfere with activities like turning off the SONNET crystal and any attempt to follow the mi-go once it scurries away—not because it has any affinity for the mi-go or the crystal, but because it tries to attack whenever the base personnel are distracted by another task. Given the chance, it also attacks the greys and may even go after the trapped mi-go. Once freed, however, the mi-go will be able take wing and leave the "helpful" humans to their fate. The characters may be able to kill the dimensional shambler with the few weapons available, or they may try to flee from it. Unfortunately, since it can phase through walls, barricading themselves inside a secure location is not an option. It will pursue the base personnel until it loses all but its last three hit points, then it will flee by phasing out of this dimension. Fortunately it stalks the base personnel slowly, since it has no idea that the BLUE FLY commandos are on the way. The Gamemaster should remember to play the dimensional shambler as cunning and stealthy. It will not simply charge into the characters' gun sights.

We're From the Government, We're Here to Help

Once the characters have freed the mi-go, turned off the SONNET device in the van, and disposed of the dimensional shambler, there is still one last problem: the BLUE FLY Team.

They arrive on the scene with an Apache AH-64 attack helicopter to scout the area forty minutes after the crash. If the characters have not deactivated the SONNET crystal, they will be treated to a fireworks display as the EM pulse of the crystal causes the helicopter to crash outside the base's perimeter fence. Following this, the BLUE FLY team will not attempt to approach the base by helicopter, but instead fly to within four miles, put a team of eleven commandos down on the ground and have them march to the base. The team does not arrive until two hours after the crash, but are equipped with the proper protection gear to survive the march without losing Sanity points. Once they get to the base they deactivate SONNET, secure the crash site, kill any hostiles (madmen, the dimensional shambler, any characters who don't know when not to pick a fight), and round up the other base personnel. The survivors will be checked for injuries and delivered for debriefing.

If SONNET is deactivated, the AH-64 circles the base and relays observations back to the rest of the team. If the characters are out in the open and being chased by the dimensional shambler, the AH-64 hoses the beast with its chain gun. The AH-64 gunner has a ranged attack bonus with the chain gun of +7.

Five minutes after the AH-64 scouts the base, a Black Hawk arrives and disgorges a team of commandos who proceed as described above.

If the characters take a base vehicle and flee, either getting past the two-mile EM radius, or leaving after the SONNET device is deactivated, they will be quickly tracked down and intercepted by the BLUE FLY helicopters. Sharpshooters disable the vehicles with gunfire if the characters refuse to stop. All fleeing base personnel will be taken into "protective custody" and debriefed. Characters trying to walk away from the base will be treated the same way. Characters picked up on the open road are advanced to the end of the scenario.

Once the BLUE FLY commandos take the characters into custody, the scenario is at an end. Tell the characters that they are flown to Offut Air Force Base in Omaha where they receive excellent medical care, which may seem perhaps a bit too good. Are the Air Force doctors examining them like lab rats? Then a team from Air Force Intelligence debriefs them at length and warns them not to speak to the press or public about the incident. The "alien" aspects of the incident are classified Top Secret. The characters are finally told that an experimental device being temporarily stored at Platte AFB (but not in operation) malfunctioned, causing extensive hallucinations among the staff; there were no aliens, no documents referring to "expendable" personnel, no monsters, and so on. It was all in the characters' minds, and if they ever tell anyone differently they'll find themselves in jail for espionage and treason. Finally, the Air Force offers the surviving base personnel immediate honorable discharges with full benefits and a fat compensation bonus of $25,000.

Sanity Rewards

Freeing the mi-go grants no Sanity reward since, after all, they were tricked.

Killing the mi-go: 1d6 (but only if the encounter with the mi-go turns violent).

Killing the dimensional shambler: 1d10.

All base personnel survive: 1d8 (unlikely, but possible).

If the Gamemaster is running "PX Poker Night" as a one-nighter, the scenario ends here. If it is being run as an introduction to a *Delta Green* campaign, the Gamemaster should give the character the "Recruitment Pass." Being recruited by Delta Green should allow the characters a + 1d2 Sanity bonus.

The Recruitment Pass

Everything seems to have been wrapped up until, weeks after the incident, while performing some everyday task like shopping or eating in a restaurant, the characters are approached individually by a stylishly dressed black woman with a head full of long braids and sporting a tiny set of blue-tinted sunglasses. She introduces herself as "Ms. Green" and offers the characters her condolences over the loss of their "buddy" and presents the character with an obituary. The obituary chronicles the death by natural causes, of one of the other surviving base personnel. Gamemasters should improvise something to fit the survivor's situations. Insane survivors could "commit suicide" in a mental institution. Sane survivors could suffer a fatal car crash. Injured survivors could die of an "infection" related to their injuries. If no other personnel survived the incident at Platte AFB, she merely tells the characters that they are in danger. The characters will probably have a few questions.

Why are we in danger?

"Because you saw things not meant to be seen. Someone has decided that bribes and threats are not enough to ensure your silence and more permanent solutions are being arranged."

Who were those guys at Platte?

"They're a faction in the intelligence community who've got more ambition than good sense."

What are they up to?

"Selling out this country to invaders."

What invaders?

"You've already seen them."

If this faction and the invaders are working together, then what was happening at Platte AFB?

"Some of the worst fights happen in the best families, y'know?"

Who are you?

"I'm with another faction. One that doesn't want to kill you."

What is the name of your "faction?"

"If the intelligence community were a family, we'd be the uncle nobody talks about."

What does your faction do?

"What we do is more like pest control than law enforcement. What you saw in Nebraska is just the tip of the iceberg. There are things out there that need putting down. Things nobody believes in."

Can you protect us?

"No. The President of the United States couldn't protect you. He couldn't protect himself if these guys wanted him dead. The best we can do is hide you."

What do you want from us?

"Information. Your official report to the Air Force has been censored. We want to know what really happened at Platte AFB. You help us, and we'll help you stay alive. We may even be able to give you a job."

Scenario Timeline

The following timeline is meant to aid Gamemasters in the effective running of this scenario. Events at Platte AFB take place over little more than ten hours, with the real meat of the action taking as little as 50 minutes before it is resolved. The Gamemaster should always stress the urgency of the situation to the characters.

1:00 P.M. The van from Project MOONDUST arrives at the front gate.

3:00 P.M. The SONNET device is activated at low levels of emission. The base personnel feel the first effects of the SONNET device.

9:00 P.M. The SONNET device is turned up to full strength. Base personnel begin suffering catastrophic Sanity losses.

9:05 P.M. The mi-go gate-ship appears, violently reacts with the SONNET device, and crashes. The dimensional shambler is gated onto the base by the reaction. It hides and begins to look for lone base personnel to pick off one at a time.

9:15 P.M. The two greys emerge from the gate-ship.

9:20 P.M. The two greys cross the airfield and approach the base personnel.

9:40 P.M. The first Apache helicopter arrives on the scene to scout out the base and the crash site. It crashes if SONNET is not deactivated.

9:45 P.M. If the base personnel deactivated SONNET, the BLUE FLY commandos arrive by helicopter to secure the base.

11:00 P.M. If SONNET was not deactivated by the base personnel, the first BLUE FLY commandos arrive by foot to secure the base.

Special Time Considerations: BLUE FLY commandos arrive at the base 30 minutes after the base personnel succeed in making a radio or telephone call for help.

Obviously, Ms. Green will not be very forthcoming, but she will tell them that she is a member of an "agency," the name of which she cannot reveal. In truth, she is a member of the Delta Green conspiracy. Delta Green is opposed to Majestic-12 and its unholy alliance with the greys, and also suspects that the greys are a front for a much darker, even more alien force. If the characters balk at joining the conspiracy, feel free to have Ms. Green mail them a few more obituaries over the next couple of weeks showing that the survivors of Platte AFB are dying (of natural causes) at an alarming rate. If there were no other survivors, the Gamemaster may want to have the brakes on one of the character's car mysteriously fail. Just about the *time they're thinking about running for it, Ms. Green will* make another recruitment pass. She offers them new identities and a safehouse in rural Oregon in which to hide. She also suggests that as "un-persons," the characters might prove useful to her organization doing "deniable" operations for them. After all, on whom can they inform if they never know whom they are working for?

If the characters agree to Ms. Green's proposition, they have just been recruited by Delta Green. Now their real problems are about to begin.

NPCs and Enemies

Major Louis Sprague, Base Commander, Platte AFB, NB

Major Sprague can thank his alcoholism for his current plum assignment. In addition to ruining his career, his love of drink has also seriously eroded his health. Sprague is not terribly imaginative or flexible in his thinking, brooking no talk about "ghost lights" or UFOs. As far as he's concerned, the subject was closed when the Air Force ended Project Blue Book in 1969.

Sprague permits no deviations from his orders, and never fails to remind his soldiers that staying in his good graces is all that stands between them and a court marshal or dishonorable discharge. When things get dangerous, Sprague is of little or no help. In fact, thanks to his already limited Sanity, he'll be an impediment.

Despite his deteriorating health, Sprague remains a strong, imposing man (he used to play football in high school and still looks the part). The 41-year-old Caucasian man stands 6'2" tall and weighs 210 lbs. A florid face and heavily veined, thick nose show the signs of long-term alcohol abuse. Often-bloodshot, gray eyes stare out from his regulation-cut steel gray hair.

Major Louis Sprague: Male 2nd level; HD 2d6-2; hp 7; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 9; Atk +4 melee (1d3+2, punch) or +1 ranged (2d10, rifle); SV Fort +3, Ref -1, Will -1; Str 14, Dex 8, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills: Appraise +5, Computer Use +4, Craft (electronics) +5, Diplomacy +4, Drive +2, Jump +7, Listen +3, Knowledge (accounting) +3, Knowledge (military science) +6, Repair +4, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +5.

Feats: Dodge, WP (*rifle, thrown*).

Equipment: Weapons locker keys.

Sanity: 55.

Majestic-12 Security Officer

The following stat block covers the three Majestic-12 security guards who stand watch outside the mysterious van (at least until they are killed). It's unlikely that the PCs will have justification (or, for that matter, the ability) to get into the van before the mi-go ship arrives, but if they do, use the security officer stat block (without body armor, combat skills, or weapons) to simulate the two scientists within.

Majestic-12 Security Officer (ruthless killer): Male 2nd level; HD 2d6+4; hp 13; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17; Atk +4 melee (grapple, special) or +4 ranged (2d6, .45 pistol); SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +4, Drive +7, Knowledge (electronics) +7, Hide +7, Listen +5, Open Lock +7, Move Silently +7, Search +6, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Tumble +5.

Feats: Martial Arts, Weapon Focus (grapple), Weapon Proficiency (pistol).

Equipment: Kevlar and shielded helmet (+5 armor bonus).

Sanity: 55.

Blue Fly Commando (elite soldier): Male 3rd level; HD 3d6+9; hp 22; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19; Atk +6 melee (1d6 +3, punch) or +5 ranged (1d10, Baretta M92) or +6 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +9, Heal +7, Hide +8, Jump +8, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Search +5, Spot +6, Swim +6, Use Rope +5, Wilderness Lore +3, Drive or Pilot +5.

Feats: Martial Artist, Weapon Focus (M-16), Weapon Proficiency (pistol, rifle).

Equipment: Heavy body armor and shielded helmet (+7 armor bonus).

Sanity: 60.

The Mi-Go (a fun guy from Yuggoth): CR 2; Medium-size Aberration (lesser independent race); HD 2d8+2; hp 12*; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor) in terrene atmospheres, 120 ft. (perfect) in deep space vacuum; AC 12; Atk 2 nippers +1 melee or +3 ranged; SA nipper snatch, spells; SQ damage reduction 10/+2, darkvision 60 ft., blindsight, immunities, resistance to cold 30, vulnerable to drowning; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 6.

Skills: Concentration +6, Disable Device +10**, Hide +6, Knowledge (mathematics) +8, Move Silently +6, Psychic Focus +5, Repair +13**, Search +7, Speak Other Language (English) +4, Tumble +5.

Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Point Blank Shot; *Psychic Feat:* Sensitive.

Sanity Loss: 0/1d6.

*When the player characters first encounter the mi-go, it has 0 hit points due to injuries from the crash.

**Mi-go receive a +5 racial bonus on all Repair and Disable Device checks.

Nipper Snatch (Ex): A favorite mi-go tactic is to swoop down upon an unsuspecting target, grab her in its pinchers, and then fly into the sky with its prisoner. This works just like a grapple, except that the mi-go gets a +4 bonus on its grapple check and the victim gains no free attack. An opponent taken by surprise (flat-footed) may not resist the snatch the round she is grabbed, but may attempt to break free on the next or subsequent rounds. The mi-go either carries a snatched foe up to a great height and drops her, or else continues upward, its speed ever increasing as it leaves the atmosphere behind and its abductee's lungs burst.

Spells (Ex): The mi-go encountered in "PX Poker Night" knows the following spells: *create gate*, *cloud memory*, *deflect harm*.

Typical Grey (mindless puppet): CR 1/2; Medium-size Construct; HD 1d10; hp 5; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 9; Atk -2 melee (grapple, special) or -1 ranged; SQ construct traits, darkvision 60 ft.; SV Fort —, Ref -1, Will +0; Str 6, Dex 9, Con —, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Sanity Loss: 0/1d3.

Construct Traits (Ex): As constructs, greys are immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, and death effects. Constructs cannot heal damage on their own. A construct is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, or ability drain. It is immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects). When reduced to 0 hit points or less, it is immediately destroyed.

Dimensional Shambler (cunning brute): CR 3; Large Outsider (lesser independent race); HD 3d8+9; hp 24; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 12; Atk claw +7 melee (1d6+6); SA improved grab, planar jaunt; SQ damage reduction 5/+1, darkvision 60 ft., intuit direction; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 19, Dex 11, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills: Escape Artist +6, Hide +2, Listen +5, Move Silently +4, Wilderness Lore +4.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Sanity Loss: 0/1d10.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a dimensional shambler hits with a claw, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without allowing its opponent a free attack. The shambler uses its claw to hold the opponent. Assuming the victim doesn't break free on its action, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals the damage listed for the claw, or the shambler can choose to take the victim with it on a planar jaunt.

Planar Jaunt (Su): A dimensional shambler can shift between the physical world and another plane of existence as a free action, then shift back to the physical world as a move action. If a dimensional shambler has a Medium-size or smaller foe grappled, the foe also shifts planes with the shambler.

The Frayed Ends of Sanity

Over the course of "PX Poker Night," lots and lots of characters are going to go very, very insane. This section gives tips on how to handle insanity for each character. If your players are experienced *Call of Cthulhu* enthusiasts, you might want to let them handle their characters' slide into insanity themselves. Otherwise, use the information below to push them in the right direction, perhaps taking players aside and giving them a new (insanity-driven) motivation. For NPCs, simply use these guidelines.

2nd Lt. Michael O'Shea: O'Shea begins to grow restless as he loses Sanity. He won't understand what's wrong, but will not be able to keep still, fidgeting non-stop. Temporary insanity causes O'Shea to babble incoherently with terror. Indefinite insanity leaves him with amnesia, unable to understand how he came to be at Platte AFB. At zero Sanity, O'Shea is overcome by a suicidal mania, taking his life by either crashing a car or throwing himself off the roof of the control tower.

Technical Sgt. Robert Bach: Sgt. Bach becomes more irritable as he loses Sanity, but reserves his ire for the base's officers, since officers ruined his career. If temporarily insane, Bach suffers hysterical outbursts of anger directed at the officers, berating their incompetence, dishonesty, and sloth. If indefinitely insane, Bach becomes convinced that Major Sprague and Lt. O'Shea are somehow involved with the events at the base, and that steps must be taken to stop them. At zero Sanity, Bach attempts to murder any officer he sees. When he runs out of officers, everyone starts to look like an officer.

Staff Sgt. Frank Long: As he loses Sanity, Sgt. Long suffers from an inability to focus. He becomes especially distracted in the presence of any smokers (such as Airman Ligotti), or by open flames, seemingly becoming stupefied by the fire until it is extinguished. Temporary insanity causes Long to obsessively insist that fire is the only way to deal with the problems on the base: the strange van, the greys, the dimensional shambler, etc. He attempts to obtain or create Molotov cocktails or other incendiary weapons. Indefinite insanity results in pyromania, which manifests in a conviction to burn the base to the ground using the aviation fuel trucks. Once his Sanity has reached zero, Long tries to commit suicide by immolating himself.

Cpl. Bob Price: As his Sanity slips, Cpl. Price becomes angry over the slightest confrontations, snapping and cursing even at officers. He becomes even more enraged if put on report for his bad behavior. If temporarily insane, Price single-mindedly attacks the (apparent) cause of his Sanity loss, ignoring the

safety of others. If indefinitely insane, Price becomes incoherent, unable to communicate with anyone. Any loss of Sanity thereafter provokes a violent reaction. At zero Sanity, Price is just a rabid dog, uncommunicative and homicidal.

Cpl. Ted Klien: As Klien's Sanity drains away he becomes preoccupied with his appearance. He continuously checks his eyes, gums, and complexion, convinced that he looks sick. Temporary insanity results in panicked flight. Indefinite insanity brings hallucinations that his skin, particularly his face, is peeling and flaking off, causing him to seek first aid. Permanent insanity causes him to believe he has withered away like a corpse. In such a state, Klien becomes intensely phobic about letting people see him, fleeing scrutiny and hiding his face.

Airman Tommy Ligotti: Initial Sanity loss causes Ligotti to become paranoid about some of the missing items around the base. He gets the unreasonable idea that the men in the van are with Air Force OSI and are here to investigate him. Temporary insanity results in paranoia; Ligotti suspects all around him of being part of the current threat. Indefinite insanity causes Ligotti to become obsessed with burning down the PX to cover up the packs of cigarettes he's been lifting. He will slip away from the group to accomplish this, if able. Later, he begins to worry that someone knows about the liquor he stole from the NCO club, and will take similar actions to cover the tracks of that crime. At zero Sanity, Ligotti believes that the other base personnel are here to rub him out, and that he's got to kill them first.

Airman Laura Dunsany: As Dunsany loses Sanity, she becomes more and more arrogant, prone to open insubordination of her superiors and condescension to her cohorts. If suffering from temporary insanity, Dunsany throws a fit, raging against the stupidity and incompetence of all around her and accusing everyone else of getting her into this mess. If indefinitely insane, she disconnects from whatever is happening around her, wandering away and babbling about all the idiots in her life. At zero Sanity, Dunsany becomes stupefied, curling up like a fetus, totally unresponsive to the world.

Airman Lynn Carter: After her first Sanity loss, Carter becomes easily offended by any contact with the male base personnel. She perceives verbal exchanges as come-ons and physical contact as unwanted advances. All this (perceived) attention makes her very anxious. Temporary insanity causes Carter to flee in panic, looking for a safe place to hide. If indefinitely insane, Carter becomes phobic about any physical contact with others. As her Sanity slips toward zero, she becomes horrified by any physical contact with *anything*: people, clothes, the floor, water, and even her own skin.

Airman Brian Lundy: Sanity loss causes Lundy to become more and more jumpy (particularly in the dark) as he begins to feel afraid for no explainable reason. Temporary insanity results in hallucinations that provoke thoughtless panic. If armed, Lundy may fire at any movement. Indefinite insanity causes Lundy to believe that the darkness is closing in on him; he may attack or flee from nearby shadows. At zero Sanity, Lundy becomes catatonic with fear whenever in the absence of light.

Airman Clark Smith: As his Sanity erodes, Airman Smith becomes more aggressive and short-tempered, likely to either start or join any fight that might break out. Temporary insanity causes Smith to faint dead away following a short screaming fit. If indefinitely insane, Smith instigates violent and lascivious attacks on the female airmen. At zero Sanity, a naked smith stalks and attacks anyone he encounters.

Airman Randy Campbell: Like many of the others, Campbell begins to feel uncomfortable and irritated for no explainable reason as he begins to lose Sanity. If he goes temporarily insane, he becomes catatonic for about 10 minutes. Once he snaps out of it, he denies that it ever happened. If he becomes indefinitely insane, Campbell becomes enraged at Cpl. Klien, attempting to beat the man to death for no other reason than he "always hated his face." If reduced to zero Sanity, Campbell falls into a near catatonic stupor, engaging in clumsy acts of self-mutilation unless restrained.

Major Louis Sprague: Major Sprague's early Sanity loss manifests as paranoia about his authority being undermined. He reacts angrily to any questioning of his decisions, becoming even more a martinet than usual. Temporary Sanity loss causes Sprague to deny anything unusual is going on. Contradictions will be met with hysterical accusations of insubordination. With higher or indefinite Sanity loss, Sprague becomes convinced that the men are mutinying. He arms himself with weapons from the weapons locker and attempts to kill the mutineers.

Pre-Generated Characters/ Base Personnel

Prior to beginning play, photocopy and clip the following character dossiers, passing them out to your players. Divide characters as you wish, but there's certainly nothing wrong with allowing the players to read over the short character descriptions and choose the character they'd most like to play. Surplus characters become NPCs.

Remember to station a handful of NPCs at the guard shack or control tower. All player characters should attend the PX poker night game. It is, at least until tonight, the highlight of their month.

2nd Lt. Michael O'Shea, Executive Officer Platte AFB

2nd Lt. O'Shea is at Platte AFB to disabuse him of the delusion that he can travel at Mach 3 when he's not in an F-16. O'Shea is an adrenaline junkie. He's all about the speed. He's had his driver's license revoked for street racing and other moving violations. Then he violated his CO's order not to drive without a license. Rather than prosecute him for the violation of the Code of Military Justice, the CO sent O'Shea to Platte AFB to cool his heels in Nebraska. O'Shea didn't have to spend a day at Platte before he realized that this was not where he wanted to end up. Now he's desperate to be rotated out of Platte so he can get his career back on track, if he can.

O'Shea is a trim, wiry 25-year-old Caucasian male. He stands 5'8" and weighs 176 lbs. He has red hair, blue eyes and a freckled complexion. He is a plain-looking man who appears younger than his true age.

2nd Lt. Michael O'Shea: Male 1st level; HD 1d6; hp 6; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11; Atk +2 melee (1d3+1, punch) or +2 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +4, Craft (electronics) +6, Drive +8, Hide +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Pilot (jet) +8, Pilot (prop) +5, Repair +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Swim +3.

Feats: Skill Emphasis (Drive), Skill Emphasis (Pilot [jet]), Weapon Proficiency (rifle).

Sanity: 60.

Technical Sgt. Robert Bach, Chief of Operations

Sgt. Bach is doing someone else's penance. Last year, while working for the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI), his team was involved in a massive counter-intelligence failure. A laptop computer full of classified data was lost and (as far as Bach can tell) records were altered to make it look like he was the last person to use it. He was transferred out of OSI and dumped at Platte AFB to finish out his enlistment. He is bitterly disappointed that this has ruined his chances of doing work for any other government agency. Bach expects to just get through this year and start looking for work in the private sector.

Bach is a tall, well-built 32-year-old Caucasian male (6'4" and 230 lbs). Small patches of gray speckle his full head of brown hair. Despite his height, Bach has the sort of nondescript appearance common to counter-intelligence agents.

Technical Sgt. Robert Bach: Male 1st level; HD 1d6+2; hp 8; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12; Atk +2 melee (1d3+1, punch) or +3 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 9.

Skills: Bluff +3, Craft (electronics) +4, Craft (photography) +4, Diplomacy +6, Drive +6, Hide +5, Knowledge (law) +4, Knowledge (medicine [forensics]) +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Sense Motive +9, Spot +7.

Feats: Skill Emphasis (Diplomacy), Skill Emphasis (Sense Motive), Weapon Proficiency (rifle).

Sanity: 80.

Airman Brian Lundy, Groundskeeper

Airman Lundy is a screw-up with a long string of poor performance reviews dating back from basic training. The Air Force has wisely assigned him to the place he can do the least damage. Fortunately Lundy hasn't quite tumbled to the fact that Platte is a punishment detail. He still thinks he's being all he can be and is looking forward to putting the fact that he was "head groundskeeper" on his resume. He is often assigned to guard duty since he actually enjoys it and thinks it is a way to distinguish himself . . . not that he's really any good at it.

Lundy is a fresh-faced, good-looking 19-year-old Caucasian kid with not a lot going on upstairs. He stands 5'9" and weighs 170 lbs. He has blond hair and vapid blue eyes.

Airman Brian Lundy: Male 1st level; HD 1d6; hp 7; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12; Atk +3 melee (1d3+2, punch; or 1d8+2, axe; or 2d8+2, chainsaw) or +3 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will -1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +6, Drive +2, Hide +6, Jump +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Repair +3, Search –1, Spot +3, Swim +3, Use Rope +2, Wilderness Lore -1.

Feats: WP (melee, rifle, thrown).

Equipment: Wood axe, chainsaw (in gardening shed).

Sanity: 40.

Airman Clark Smith, Aircraft Maintenance

Airman Smith joined the Air Force to escape the scrutiny of the local law enforcement in his hometown of Houston, Texas. Smith has a long juvenile record, including auto theft, vandalism, and even violent crime. Had the Air Force known, Smith would have been turned away by the recruiters, but the juvenile records were sealed. However, there were discipline problems at basic training and he was sent to Platte AFB on the theory that putting him out of the way was the best thing to do.

Airman Smith is a good-looking 19-year-old Caucasian man. He has a contemptuous air about him. He has blond hair and blue eyes. He stands 5'10" and weighs 173 lbs. He still sports garish tattoos from his days as a gang member.

Airman Clark Smith: Male 1st level; HD 1d6; hp 8; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +4 melee (1d3+2, punch) or +1 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will -2; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 6, Cha 14.

Skills: Climb +2, Bluff +6, Climb +6, Drive (auto) +4, Drive (motorcycle) +4, Hide +4, Move Silently +4, Open Lock +4, Repair +4, Spot -2, Swim +2, Use Rope +0.

Feats: Weapon Focus (unarmed strike), Weapon Proficiency (melee, rifle).

Sanity: 30.

Airman Lynn Carter, Air Traffic Control

When Airman Carter refused to submit to her ROTC instructor's sexual advances, he ensured she flunked out and didn't receive her officer's commission. Even worse, she had to finish her service requirement as an enlisted person. When she took the Air Force and the ROTC program to court over this the suit failed spectacularly. She made a lot of enemies and was portrayed as a malcontent trying to use the courts to strike a blow for radical feminism. This punishment detail didn't surprise her. She is determined to get through this and leave the Air Force behind her.

Carter is a very attractive 23-year-old Caucasian woman who is unpretentious and natural in her demeanor. She stands 5'9" and weighs 138 lbs. She wears her shoulder-length brown hair pinned up when on duty, and wears glasses when she reads. She has blue eyes.

Airman Lynn Carter: Female 1st level; HD 1d6; hp 6; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11; Atk +1 melee (1d3, punch; or pepper spray, special) or +2 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16.

Skills: Computer Use +6, Diplomacy +7, Drive +5, Knowledge (electronics) +6, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (law) +5, Listen +6, Repair +5, Research +6, Sense Motive +3, Spot +10, Swim +3.

Feats: Alertness, Skill Emphasis (Spot), Weapon Proficiency (rifle).

Equipment: Pepper spray, 5 shots (melee touch attack to use; victim must make a Fort save against DC 10 or be stunned for 2 rounds).

Sanity: 60.

Staff Sgt. Frank Long, Fire/Rescue and Medic

Staff Sgt. Long has a problem; a gambling problem. Gambling losses cost him his house and his marriage, and now his career. In order to pay off his debts, he hired his talents as a fire fighter out as an arsonist. He did these jobs off base to assist insurance defrauders to get past the arson investigators. He succeeded for months, but eventually the suspicions of arson investigators began to close in. He was transferred to Platte AFB when the military police failed to turn up any direct evidence, but the suspicions about his involvement were not dispelled. Now Long lives in perpetual fear that the insurance scammers he worked with will roll on him and rat him out to the authorities.

Staff Sgt. Long is a tall, muscular 33-year-old African-American man who stands 6'2" tall and weighs 176 lbs. Mild hazel eyes highlight a strongly featured, confident face. He keeps his head completely shaved.

Staff Sgt. Frank Long: Male 1st level; HD 1d6; hp 6; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +3 melee (1d3+2, punch) or +1 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Climb +6, Demolitions +3, Drive +4, Knowledge (chemistry) +6, Knowledge (medicine) +5, Knowledge (pharmacy) +5, Heal +8, Jump +6, Listen +5, Operate Heavy Machinery +2, Search +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Skill Emphasis (Heal), Weapon Proficiency (rifle, thrown weapons).

Sanity: 65.

Airman Randy Campbell, Fire/Rescue

Airman Campbell is an experienced, competent fire-fighter who can't stay out of trouble when he's not putting out fires. He was once Sgt. Campbell, but his insubordination cost him his rank. Now he's stuck at Platte AFB, waiting for his last year to run out so he can be discharged and go looking for work with a municipal fire department. He's also sensitive about his looks. This combined with his tendency to act before thinking can easily start a fight.

Airman Campbell is a fit, well-built, singularly unattractive 25-year-old Caucasian male. He stands 6'3" and weighs 194 lbs. His hair is brown, as are his eyes.

Airman Randy Campbell: Male 1st level; HD 1d6; hp 7; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +3 melee (1d3+2, punch) or +1 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 15, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +6, Drive +4, Heal +6, Jump +6, Listen +5, Operate Heavy Machinery +2, Repair +2, Spot +5, Swim +2, Tumble +4, Use Rope +0, Wilderness Lore -1.

Feats: Alertness, Skill Emphasis (Heal), Weapon Proficiency (melee, rifle).

Sanity: 30.

Airman Laura Dunsany, Administrative Assistant

Airman Dunsany suffers from what could be charitably called "personality deficit disorder." In other words, she is a jerk. She has an uncanny ability to rub everyone she encounters the wrong way. This had led to a long series of poor performance reviews, a lack of promotions and transfers in which various commanders have attempted to make her someone else's problem. She thinks she knows more than everyone around her. While she is competent at her job, she is also so arrogant that it inevitably leads to alienating her co-workers.

Dunsany is a dark-eyed, dark-skinned 20-year-old African-American woman with extremely short, black hair. Her face wears a perpetual sour scowl. She stands 5'5" and weighs 130 lbs.

Airman Laura Dunsany: Female 1st level; HD 1d6; hp 7; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 9; Atk +0 melee (1d3-1, punch) or +0 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +1, Ref -1, Will +6; Str 9, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills: Appraise +2, Climb +3, Computer Use +5, Drive +3, Diplomacy +1, Jump +3, Knowledge (accounting) +5, Knowledge (law) +2, Listen +8, Research +1, Spot +8, Tumble +3.

Feats: Dodge, Martial Arts, Weapon Proficiency (rifle).

Sanity: 90.

Airman Tommy Ligotti, Motorpool Maintenance

Things go missing around Airman Ligotti. Aircraft components, liquor from the officer's club, weapons from the arsenal, vehicles from the motorpool—nothing is immune when Ligotti is on base. Ligotti is just doing the same job he used to do when he was working for a Mob-connected crew back in New Jersey. While he has been slippery enough to avoid getting caught, he has not avoided the attention of the military police. The provost marshal at the last airbase he served on made sure that Ligotti was transferred someplace where there was nothing worth stealing. Still, Ligotti is sure that the things he learned stealing from the Air Force will help him maintain a long career stealing from Uncle Sam.

Ligotti is a short, thick 24-year-old Caucasian male, standing 5'7" and weighing 169 pounds. He has thick, black hair, dark eyes, bushy brows, and a pockmarked face. He smokes as much as he can get away with.

Airman Tommy Ligotti: *Male 1st level; HD 1d6; hp 6; Init +2* (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12; Atk +2 melee (1d3+1, punch) or +3 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +0, Ref +4, Will 0; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Bluff +3, Climb +5, Hide +6, Jump +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +5, Repair +4, Sense Motive +2, Sleight of Hand +4, Spot +4, Search +6.

Feats: Martial Artist, Weapon Proficiency (pistol, rifle).

Sanity: 50.

Cpl. Ted Klien, Aircraft Maintenance

Cpl. Ted Klien once bragged he could get any woman he wanted. When he found out there was a betting pool worth $3,400 for the man who could bring back proof that he had seduced the base commander's daughter, Klien accepted the challenge. The good news is Klien brought back proof—a videotape. The bad news is that videotapes tend to get copied and passed around. While this isn't exactly a violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, it is a career ender when it gets back to the girl's father. The general made sure Klien would have lots of time without distractions at Platte AFB to contemplate the error of his ways. Klien has done so and has decided that as soon as he's out of the Air Force he's going to try modeling or maybe acting.

Ted Klien is a little too good looking to be believed. The 21-year-old Caucasian male stands 5'9" and weighs 168 pounds, with black hair and pale blue eyes. He is all white teeth and dimples and fetching, soulful eyes. Like most folks with an honest face, he isn't.

Cpl. Ted Klien: Male 1st level; HD 1d6; hp 6; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11; Atk +2 melee (1d3+1, punch) or +2 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will -1; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +11, Climb +5, Diplomacy +8, Craft (electronics) +5, Drive +1, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +6, Listen +2, Operate Heavy Machinery +5, Repair +5, Sense Motive +3, Spot +3.

Feats: Skill Emphasis (Bluff), Trustworthy, Weapon Proficiency (rifle),.

Sanity: 45.

Cpl. Bob Price, Base Security

Airman Price was an Air Force MP, a member of the Security Police. He transferred to Platte because he brutally beat an Air Force colonel during an arrest. The reason he received a transfer rather than a general court-marshal was that the colonel had been in the process of beating up his wife. Price was the first officer on the scene and he couldn't resist giving the colonel a taste of his own medicine. The provost marshal suspected that the colonel didn't resist arrest as much as Price suggested, but the colonel's wife backed up Price's version of events. Price knows he narrowly escaped serious disciplinary action and hopes he can get out of Platte soon and get his career back on track.

Cpl. Price is a strongly built, well-muscled 23-year-old Caucasian male. He stands 6'1" and weighs 223 lbs. His hair is brown, his eyes hazel. His prominent chin dominates his profile. His eyes are narrow slits.

Cpl. Bob Price: Male 1st level; HD 1d6; hp 7; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +4 melee (1d3+3, punch) or +1 ranged (2d6, M-16); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +7, Diplomacy +4, Drive +4, Heal +5, Hide +1, Jump +3, Knowledge (law) +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +4, Spot +5, Tumble +1, Wilderness Lore +3.

Feats: Track, Weapon Proficiency (pistol, rifle).

Sanity: 65.

Weapons Quick Reference

Improvised Weapons	Dmg.	Crit.	Range Inc.	Weight	Type
Chainsaw	3d6	x2	—	10 lbs.	Slashing
Fire axe	1d8	x3	—	6 lbs.	Slashing
Gas-powered edger	2d6	x2	—	20 lbs.	Slashing
Improvised club*	1d6	x2	—	varies	Bludgeoning
Letter opener	1d3	x2	—	.5 lb.	Piercing
Machete	1d6	19-20/x2	—		Slashing
Oxy-acetylene welder	2d8	x2	touch	50 lbs.	Fire**
Pruning shears	1d3	x2	—	1 lb.	Piercing
Shovel	1d6	x2	—	4 lbs.	Bludgeoning

* Tire iron, chair leg, lead pipe, wrench, etc.

** The welder's tank has a hardness of 5 and 5 hit points. A tank reduced to 0 hit points ruptures and explodes, dealing 6d6 points of damage to the wielder and 3d6 points of splash damage to anyone within a 5-foot radius (Reflex save, DC 15, for half damage). The wielder can "fire" the welder 10 times before it runs out of gas. Hitting with the welder requires only a touch attack.

Firearms	Dmg.	Crit.	Action	Cap.	Loading	Range	Rate
M16A2 5.56x45mm	2d6	x3	select	20 or 30	mag	200 ft.	Autofire
Baretta M92	1d10	x3	semi/D	15	mag	20 ft.	Multifire
SOCCOM .45	2d8	x3	semi/D	10	mag	20 ft.	Multifire
20mm Chain Gun	3d12	x5	auto†	1000	mag.	600 ft.	Autofire

Fragmentation Weapons	Dmg.	Blast Radius	Action	Cap.	Loading	Range	Rate
M203 Grenade Launcher	3d6	20 ft.	semi	1	breach	200 ft.	Standard
20mm Chain Gun	3d6	10 ft.	auto†	1000	mag.	600 ft.	Autofire
Molotov cocktail	1d6	5 ft.	N/A	1	N/A	10 ft.	Standard

† Due to the stability and high-tech targeting system of the mounted chain gun, there are no penalties for autofire. Only hits that are +5 over the required to-hit roll result in a direct hit by the chain gun. All other "hits" use fragmentation damage.

Did I tell you about Vogel yet? No? The guy was amazing. He'd charge into combat with a target painted onto his helmet, daring the Germans to shoot him, and did they ever! You've seen that famous photo of him charging across that bridge in Copehagen right? The one where the other Danish resistance members are getting mowed down? I took that photo. Jan lived for moments like that. He lived to take the fight to the Germans...

What did I live for? I lived to go home. I was indestructible but I wasn't stupid. I knew everyone's luck ran out some time. Jan never got it. He never saw the end coming. Turns out he didn't have to, the end found him just fine.

GODLIKE

There Were Giants in Those Days Part Five: Vogel, the Bird

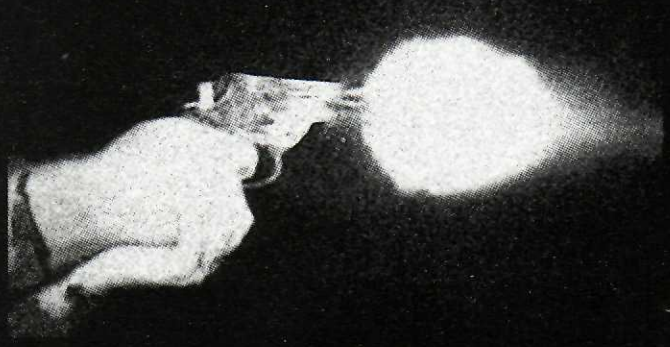
By Dennis Detwiller

For Jan, it all began in the spring of 1940, when the Nazis rolled into Denmark. He was a 20 year old layabout who had no idea of what or who he should be, until the tanks crossed the border.
Within two days, overwhelmed, the government of Denmark capitulated. As "Aryans" they would be well treated as subjects of Hitler's Reich. No one had any idea of the depth of their situation.

Those that did carried on the fight. The underground sprung up, nearly overnight, to smuggle weapons, equipment and British agents into the country. Jan joined them without a second thought...

He was caught by the Gestapo just days after the invasion, smuggling weapons...

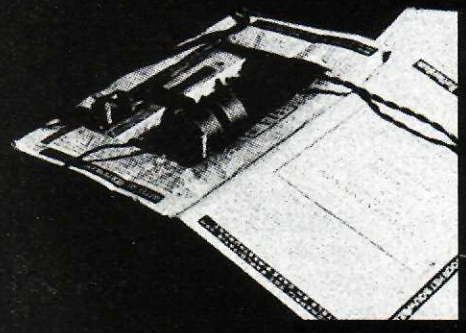
The punishment was execution by firing squad. On April 11, 1940 Jan Dinesen readied himself for death, instead, he found a new life...



When the German rifles failed to kill the youth, somehow missing him at less than twenty paces, an impatient officer stepped up to dispatch Jan with his pistol at point blank range.
He, too, missed.
Jan walked away from the firing squad, as they fired round after round, trying in vain to hit him. In an instant, his Talent had manifested.
No bullet could hit him.

He fled the city and started a new organized resistance. They terrorized the German occupation troops...

and made it all but impossible for the Nazis to rule the "conquered" territory.



The British, of course, were ecstatic. They shipped him guns, equipment and material to carry on the fight. The Germans began to call him "Der Vogel", "The Bird", and as his legend grew, so did his influence.
By the time we Americans showed up, he had Jerry on the run...

We fought together in Denmark, France, Belgium and Germany. We killed krauts and superkrauts alike. He was a good guy. Someone who felt good watching your back. Someone you could trust.
He also loved America, which didn't hurt. In fact, with some finagling, we got him a Visa to come on over after the war. At the time, it didn't seem like it would ever end.

But it did, just like everything else. One summer day the news came back, we wouldn't be going to the Pacific after all. It was over. That was it. Jan, me and Pevnost got rip roaring drunk in Paris and did some damage.
It was damn near the best day of my life...

Jan turned up in Hollywood six months later, to make some films. Two months after that, they were pulling his body from a mangled wreck on Cahuenga Boulevard

It's like that, the end. It sneaks up on you just when you think you sidestepped it. It' ll find me too, I have no doubt, indestructible or not. Until then, how about another story?

Next: Der Flieger, the First of His Kind...